

SOUTHEAST ALASKA FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE  
REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

PUBLIC MEETING

VOLUME II

Central Council Tlingit & Haida  
Elizabeth Peratrovich Hall

Juneau, Alaska  
November 1, 2017  
8:35 a.m.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

Michael Bangs, Chair  
Michael Douville  
Donald Hernandez  
Albert Howard  
Cathy Needham  
Patricia Phillips  
Steve Reifenstuhel  
Robert Schroeder  
Raymond Sensmeier  
John Yeager

Regional Council Coordinator, DeAnna Perry

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## PROCEEDINGS

(Juneau, Alaska - 11/1/2017)

(On record)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Please take your seats and we'll try to get started here. Good morning, everyone. Thanks for showing up this morning. Luckily it's not too early. It's a beautiful day out there. It's kind of tough to stay inside on a day like today. It looks like a nice fall day.

Okay. Well, we're going to start off back on our proposals. We're at WP18-03, modifying hunting and trapping seasons for wolf in Unit 1.

Mr. Suminski.

MR. SUMINSKI: Good morning, Chairman. Council Members. My name is Terry Suminski with the Forest Service. Proposal WP18-03 requests modifying the Federal hunting and trapping seasons in Unit 1 for wolves to match those currently under State regulations. This was submitted by Southeast Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council and Jeff Reeves will present the analysis.

Thank you.

MR. REEVES: Mr. Chair.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Mr. Reeves.

MR. REEVES: Can you hear me okay?

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Yeah. You're coming in good.

MR. REEVES: Okay. Wonderful. So WP18-03 you can find the executive summary on Page 124 and you can find the analysis on Page 127 in your books.

Proposal WP18-03 was submitted by this Council and it's requesting modifying the Federal hunting and trapping seasons in Unit 1 for wolves to match those currently under State regulations. The proposal would bring Federal subsistence hunting and

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harvested. Customary trade is not allowed under State regulation. Adoption of the proposal would allow for customary trade to occur from wolves harvested during the extended Federal hunting and trapping seasons. Despite increased opportunity for customary trade, the proposal would not influence harvest limits.

The proposal, therefore, is unlikely to substantially increase the harvest of wolves over present levels due to pelt quality being reduced during these periods. However, if increased trade opportunity increases the value and interest of wolf harvest during the proposed season extensions, then slight increases in harvest could result from this proposal.

Harvest during May when wolves are denning could result in mortality of breeders or helpers that are influential to the pack persistence during denning, affecting recruitment rates and population growth, especially when pack sizes are less than six wolves. A slight harvest increase during the denning period could result in impacts to small packs when harvest does occur from these packs.

Staff recommendation is to support the proposal. By adopting this proposal the Federal and State seasons will be brought into alignment in Unit 1. Federal subsistence users can already harvest wolves during the longer State seasons. Adoption of the proposal would allow subsistence users to engage in customary trade if they desire from any wolves harvested from Federal lands within the expanded seasons. With pelt quality being of a less than prime during the proposed season extensions, it is highly doubtful that harvests would increase specifically for just engaging in customary trade.

Wolf harvest in Unit 1 is currently believed to be occurring at a sustainable level based on anecdotal accounts and harvest rates. Harvests in both November and May are currently very low in comparison to other months. Alignment of Federal regulations with the State regulations should not dramatically increase harvests beyond current levels as the majority of the May harvest is already being taken by non-Federally qualified users.

This concludes my presentation.

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trapping seasons for wolves in Unit 1 into alignment with current State seasons that are currently longer.

The proposal provides for consistent regulations with the State by creating a new Federal reg that's specific to Unit 1A and a small portion of Unit 1B, extending the hunting season closing date in Units 1A and the portion south of the Bradfield Canal and the east fork of the Bradfield River to May 31. It would change the Federal trapping season starting date from November 10th to November 1st.

Wolves can be harvested either with a firearm under hunting regulations or by trap, snare or firearm under trapping regulations. Wolf harvest in the unit is affected by local weather conditions and wolf abundance. Persistent freezing results in icing of traps and snares which can often make sets inoperative, and deep snow can bury snares and trail sets rendering them useless. Deep and persistent snow can also block vehicle access to the limited roads in Unit 1. Harvests by subunit can be found in Table 1, and method of harvest is in Table 2.

Most wolves have been harvested by hunters and trappers working from boats with the majority of the trapping harvest typically occurring on State managed tidelands. Harvests by month can be found in Table 3 and method of transportation used to harvest wolves is in Table 4. Harvests in May have been very low, which is most likely related to pelt quality being degraded this late into the season. Of the eight wolves harvested by firearm in Unit 1 since 2010, only one has been harvested by a Federally qualified subsistence user.

If adopted, this proposal would provide increased harvest opportunity under Federal regulations on Federal public lands in Unit 1. The proposal is unlikely to substantially increase the harvest of wolves taken in Unit 1 because Federally qualified subsistence users can already harvest on the same lands during the same time period and with the same total State and Federal combined trapping and hunting limits that are currently allowed under State regulations.

Federal regulations allow for the customary trade of products crafted from animals

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Thank you.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Jeff. Are there any questions to Mr. Reeves.

(No comments)

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Seeing none. Thank you, Jeff. Is there any reports from consultations with the tribes or ANCSA corporations?

Orville. Thank you, Terry.

MR. LIND: Good morning, Mr. Chairman. Board Members. Again, on September 14th consultation happened for the Southeast Region. Again, we had Mr. Harvey Kitka present at the conference and he did mention that there seems to be a lack of information on the population of wolves in the area and noticed that their deer populations are lower and also that there seems to be predation happening.

That's all I have, sir.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Orville. Is there any comments from Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

MR. LOWELL: Mr. Chairman. This is Rich Lowell in Petersburg. Can you hear me okay?

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Good morning, Rich. Yeah, you're sounding loud and clear.

MR. LOWELL: Okay, good. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm acquainted with many members of the Council, but for those who do not know me and for the record my name is Richard Lowell. I'm the area wildlife biologist in the central panhandle for the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Wildlife Conservation. I oversee game management in Units 1B and 3 and I have held this position for 17 years.

I'd like to provide a brief overall harvest history for wolves in Unit 1. I'll talk a little bit about the hunting season extension and the trapping season extension.

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1 For the 11-year period 2006 to 2016,  
2 the average annual harvest throughout Unit 1 was 58  
3 wolves ranging from 41 to 79 annually. In general, 27  
4 percent of wolves are harvested -- are shot and 72  
5 percent are trapped. There are no conservation  
6 concerns for wolves in Alaska Game Management Unit 1.

7  
8 The wolf hunting season was extended to  
9 the end of May in portions of Unit 1 and those include  
10 1B south of the Bradfield Canal and the East Fork of  
11 the Bradfield River and all of Unit 1A starting with  
12 the RY2011 season. The reason for the wolf hunting  
13 season extension in the southern part of Unit 1 was to  
14 help alleviate wolf predation in areas with chronically  
15 depressed deer populations, specifically on Gravina  
16 Island and the Cleveland Peninsula.

17  
18 Since the RY '11 one-month extension of  
19 the wolf hunting season in the southern portion of Unit  
20 1, an average of slightly over one wolf per year has  
21 been taken by hunters during the month of May. In the  
22 six years since the season was extended, just one wolf  
23 was taken in southern 1B during the month of May and  
24 that was by a Federally qualified hunter. During the  
25 same period of time, a total of six wolves were taken  
26 by hunters during the month of May in Unit 1A. All six  
27 were taken by Ketchikan residents.

28  
29 In RY 2009, the wolf trapping season  
30 throughout Unit 1 was extended from a previous start  
31 date of November 10th to a start date of November 1 and  
32 that was throughout the region with the exception of  
33 Unit 4. If memory serves me correctly, I believe this  
34 was done in an attempt by the Board of Game to unify  
35 the trapping start dates for several species and  
36 coyotes and wolves in particular. However, I should  
37 point out that my memory is now as equally suspect as  
38 Member Schroeder's math.

39 (Laughter)

40  
41 In the eight years, RY '01 to RY '08,  
42 prior to a November 1 extension of the wolf trapping  
43 season, a total of 14 wolves were trapped during the  
44 month of November or on average 1.75 wolves per year.  
45 In the eight years since the Unit 1 wolf trapping  
46 season extension, just five wolves were trapped during  
47 the month of November.  
48  
49  
50

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1 Therefore, despite the earlier November  
2 1 opener for wolf trapping, the trapper harvest during  
3 the month of November has actually decreased. I should  
4 point out that most trappers do not set traps or snares  
5 for wolves until after the conclusion of the waterfowl  
6 season in Southeast, which is December 31st. They  
7 typically don't start in order to avoid catching duck  
8 dogs and to avoid catching black bears during the early  
9 part of the November season.

10  
11 The Department's recommendation is to  
12 support the proposal to align Federal and State hunting  
13 and trapping regulations for wolves in Unit 1 as the  
14 change in Federal regulations is unlikely to negatively  
15 affect the wolf harvest or hunting and trapping  
16 opportunity in the unit. Federally qualified hunters  
17 and trappers are already authorized to take wolves in  
18 Unit 1 during the proposed season dates under State  
19 regulation.

20  
21 With that, back to you, Mr. Chairman,  
22 and I will be happy to address any questions you or  
23 members of the Council may have.

24  
25 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Rich. Does  
26 anyone have any questions for Mr. Lowell.

27 Mr. Douville.

28  
29 MR. DOUVILLE: They refrain from  
30 trapping in the early part of the season because of  
31 bear, but on the other hand it's been my experience  
32 that in May you have the same thing, you have bears  
33 coming out in the spring, which puts them at some risk,  
34 but it appears that there isn't much effort in May, is  
35 that correct?

36  
37 MR. LOWELL: Member Douville, that is  
38 correct. We see trappers voluntarily curtailing  
39 efforts on both the front end and typically on the late  
40 end as you suggest to prevent incidental take of other  
41 species.

42  
43 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Rich. Any  
44 other questions.

45 (No comments)

46  
47 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Seeing none. Thank  
48  
49  
50

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1 you, Rich, for calling in. Are you going to stay  
2 online?

3  
4 MR. LOWELL: I will stay online, Mr.  
5 Chairman.

6  
7 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you. We'll move  
8 along then and may come back with questions later on  
9 during deliberation. Are there any reports from  
10 Federal agency.

11 (No comments)

12  
13 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Any tribal comments,  
14 Ms. Perry?

15  
16 MS. PERRY: No Native tribal, village  
17 comments received.

18  
19 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Any other Regional  
20 Councils, Fish and Game Advisory or Subsistence  
21 Resource Commissions.

22  
23 MS. PERRY: Not on this proposal,  
24 Chair.

25  
26 CHAIRMAN BANGS: A summary of the  
27 written public comments.

28  
29 MS. PERRY: The Council did receive  
30 some comments on Wildlife Proposal 18-03. You'll see  
31 that they begin on Page 136 of the meeting book. A  
32 summary of the written public comments are as follows:  
33 Four written comments were received. One was the  
34 general public comment from Curtis Donald Thomas of  
35 Ketchikan addressing all Southeast proposals. Key  
36 viewpoints were that attempts were being made to fix a  
37 problem that does not exist and he expressed concerns  
38 regarding new classes of citizens with special hunting  
39 rights being created. Also residency criteria and the  
40 ability of some Alaskans to harvest 20 halibut a day.

41  
42 Three additional written public  
43 comments in opposition were received from Fairbanks  
44 residents Frances Mauer, Sharon Alden and Jim Kowalsky  
45 for Alaskans for Wildlife. Viewpoints included the  
46 extension of season is overkill and would likely lead  
47 to excessive harvest of wolves and the enforcement of  
48 past quotas have been poorly managed.  
49  
50

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1 Those were the only comments received  
2 for Wildlife Proposal 18-03.

3  
4 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Ms. Perry.  
5 Is there any public testimony on this proposal.

6 (No comments)

7  
8 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Is there anyone online  
9 that wants to address this.

10 (No comments)

11  
12 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Hearing none. What's  
13 the wish of the Council.

14 Mr. Douville.

15  
16 MR. DOUVILLE: Mr. Chair. I move to  
17 adopt WP18-03.

18 MR. YEAGER: Second.

19  
20 CHAIRMAN BANGS: It's been moved by  
21 Member Douville and seconded by Member Yeager.  
22 Discussion.

23 Mr. Douville.

24  
25 MR. DOUVILLE: Mr. Chairman. I will  
26 support this proposal. There's no conservation concern  
27 and it appears that the recordkeeping supports the  
28 proposal also of the record of take. It will benefit  
29 subsistence users some and it will not restrict other  
30 users near as I can tell.

31  
32 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr.  
33 Douville. Any other comments.

34 (No comments)

35  
36 CHAIRMAN BANGS: I'll entertain a call  
37 for the question.

38 MR. REIFENSTUHL: Question.

39  
40 CHAIRMAN BANGS: The question has been  
41 called. I'll do just a yea or nay. All those in favor  
42 of this proposal say aye.  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48  
49  
50

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1 IN UNISON: Aye.  
 2  
 3 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Opposed nay.  
 4  
 5 (No opposing votes)  
 6  
 7 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Passes unanimously.  
 8 Thank you. Let's see if we can get through the next  
 9 one here. First I'd like to ask for the people on the  
 10 teleconference to identify themselves, please.  
 11  
 12 MS. CELLARIUS: Good morning, Mr.  
 13 Chair. This is Barbara Cellarius with Wrangell-St.  
 14 Elias National Park and Preserve in Copper Center.  
 15  
 16 MR. REEVES: Jeff Reeves, Forest  
 17 Service, Craig.  
 18  
 19 MS. HANSEN: Kathy Hansen, Southeast  
 20 Alaska Fishermen's Alliance.  
 21  
 22 MR. SUMMERS: Hello. This is Clarence  
 23 Summers, National Park Service in Anchorage.  
 24  
 25 MR. BURCH: Mark Burch, Department of  
 26 Fish and Game in Palmer.  
 27  
 28 MR. CROSS: This is Rob Cross with the  
 29 Forest Service in Sitka.  
 30  
 31 MS. OEHLERS: Good morning. This is  
 32 Susan Oehlers with the Forest Service in Yakutat.  
 33  
 34 MR. BETHUNE: Steve Bethune from Fish  
 35 and Game in Sitka.  
 36  
 37 MR. KOLLER: Good morning, Mr. Chair.  
 38 This is Justin Koller, subsistence biologist for Sitka  
 39 and Hoonah Ranger District.  
 40  
 41 MR. LOWELL: Good morning, Mr. Chair.  
 42 Rich Lowell with Fish and Game in Petersburg.  
 43  
 44 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Anyone else.  
 45  
 46 (No comments)  
 47  
 48 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Welcome. Thank you  
 49 for calling in. We're going to move to the next  
 50

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1 wolf populations elsewhere.  
 2  
 3 In January 2015, the Board of Game  
 4 reduced the harvest guideline level down to 20 percent  
 5 due to an apparent population decline, as well as  
 6 Alaska Department of Fish and Game identifying that  
 7 unreported take was a substantial factor in a study  
 8 area within the road accessible portions of the unit.  
 9 Twenty percent was proposed to ensure conservative  
 10 harvest management of wolves while still allowing for  
 11 meaningful harvest  
 12 opportunity.  
 13  
 14 In addition to the reduced harvest  
 15 guideline level, during regulatory years 2015 and 2016  
 16 State and Federal managers reduced the maximum  
 17 allowable harvest by an additional 50 percent as  
 18 additional conservation measures to account for  
 19 unreported human-caused mortality. Unreported  
 20 mortality also includes wounding loss, escapes from  
 21 traps, vehicle collisions, and illegal harvest. This  
 22 type of mortality has been identified as a  
 23 potentially substantial cause of mortality of wolves in  
 24 the unit.  
 25  
 26 Wolf populations on Prince of Wales  
 27 Island were thought to have remained high until the  
 28 early 1970s when extreme winters decimated deer  
 29 populations. Wolf and deer numbers were  
 30 thought to have remained at low levels in Unit 2 until  
 31 the early 1980s when the deer population rebounded.  
 32  
 33 Wolf populations are difficult to  
 34 assess in Southeast Alaska due to the dense forest  
 35 cover and because of their mobility. However,  
 36 radio-telemetry studies have allowed for estimates to  
 37 be made for a small road accessible portion of their  
 38 range and this is extrapolated across the rest of the  
 39 unit 2, with appropriate corrections made for  
 40 differences in prey populations and habitat.  
 41  
 42 As a result of initial research during  
 43 the 1990s, Person estimated that the 1994 fall wolf  
 44 population density representative in his study area was  
 45 356 wolves. This estimate, along with other findings  
 46 related to natural mortality, wound up leading the  
 47 Board of Game to establish the harvest rate of  
 48 25 percent in 1997. When new findings suggested the  
 49 natural mortality in Unit 2 was lower, the Board of  
 50

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1 proposal.  
 2  
 3 Mr. Suminski.  
 4  
 5 MR. SUMINSKI: Good morning, Mr.  
 6 Chairman. Council Members. Terry Suminski with the  
 7 Forest Service. Proposal WP18-04 requests increasing  
 8 the wolf harvest quota on Federal lands in Unit 2 from  
 9 up to 20 percent to up to 30 percent of the  
 10 most recent population estimate for the unit. This was  
 11 submitted by Southeast Alaska Subsistence Regional  
 12 Advisory Council.  
 13  
 14 Jeff Reeves will present the analysis.  
 15  
 16 Thank you.  
 17  
 18 MR. REEVES: Mr. Chairman.  
 19  
 20 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Go ahead, Jeff.  
 21  
 22 MR. REEVES: Thank you. Good morning.  
 23 Jeff Reeves, Forest Service. You can find the  
 24 executive summary for Proposal 18-04 on Page 143 in  
 25 your books. The analysis is on Page 146.  
 26  
 27 Proposal WP18-04 was also submitted by  
 28 this Council and it  
 29 requests increasing the wolf harvest quota on Federal  
 30 lands in Unit 2 from up to 20 percent of the previous  
 31 fall estimate to up to 30 percent of the most recent  
 32 fall population estimate for the unit.  
 33  
 34 The proponent seeks to increase the  
 35 allowable take of wolves on Federal lands. The  
 36 proponent is concerned that previous quotas implemented  
 37 have been far too conservative and that the reductions  
 38 in those harvest quotas during the 2015-2016 and  
 39 2016-2017 hunting and trapping seasons were not  
 40 reflective of the actual wolf population for the unit.  
 41  
 42 Unlike the remainder of Alaska, Unit 2  
 43 wolf harvest is managed under a harvest quota by  
 44 regulation. A Harvest Guideline Level for Unit 2 wolves  
 45 was set initially by the Alaska Board of Game in 1997  
 46 at 25 percent of the most recent population estimate.  
 47 In 2000, the guideline level harvest was raised to  
 48 30 percent following an analysis that indicated lower  
 49 levels of natural mortality in Unit 2 wolves than in  
 50

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1 Game increased the harvest rate to 30 percent in the  
 2 year 2000.  
 3  
 4 During the early to mid-2000s, the  
 5 Alaska Department of Fish and Game made an effort to  
 6 obtain an updated wolf population estimates and  
 7 determined that the wolf population was approximately  
 8 326 animals which was similar to the estimate  
 9 from 1994. State and Federal staff use this population  
 10 estimate to establish annual harvest levels of 90  
 11 wolves per season through the year 2010.  
 12  
 13 In 2010, both State and Federal  
 14 managers, as well as some members of the public,  
 15 believed the Unit 2 population had dropped from  
 16 previous estimates. In response, the Alaska Department  
 17 of Fish and Game worked with this Council to lower the  
 18 annual harvest quota from 90 to 60 wolves. This  
 19 harvest quota remained in effect through the 2013  
 20 season.  
 21  
 22 From 2012 to present, research was  
 23 initiated to develop more efficient and cost effective  
 24 techniques to estimate wolf numbers in the unit. The  
 25 new research included implementing hair boards to  
 26 collect hair samples for DNA fingerprinting, which will  
 27 enable researchers to identify individual wolves via  
 28 genotyping and determine wolf population estimations in  
 29 the project area.  
 30  
 31 While data collected during 2012 proved  
 32 insufficient to allow development of a population  
 33 estimate from the hair-board technique because there  
 34 were not enough recaptures, a 2012 estimate was  
 35 feasible and reported using the traditional radio  
 36 collar methods resulting in an estimate in 2012 of 106  
 37 wolves.  
 38  
 39 Data collected in 2013 were sufficient  
 40 enough for a population estimate to be generated for  
 41 the defined study area within the central portion of  
 42 Prince of Wales resulting in an estimate of 221 wolves.  
 43  
 44 Using the hair-board method again in  
 45 2014, the Unit 2 density estimate declined to 89  
 46 wolves.  
 47  
 48 There are various potential reasons for  
 49 the lower wolf estimate of 89 for the study area in  
 50

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1 2014, including an increased take of wolves from the  
2 study area prior to the 2014 population estimate,  
3 decreases in deer abundance, availability of  
4 non-ungulate prey, increases in disease in wolves,  
5 increases in unreported wolf take and the possibility  
6 of a decrease in the vulnerability of deer to wolf  
7 predation during mild winters causing subsequent  
8 decreases in recruitment and survival of wolves.  
9  
10 In the year 2015 the population  
11 estimate again determined by hair-boards was 108  
12 wolves. In 2016, the study area was expanded resulting  
13 in an estimate of 231 wolves.  
14  
15 Wolves can be harvested either with a  
16 firearm under hunting regulations or by trap, snare or  
17 firearm under trapping regulations. Table 1 shows that  
18 93 percent of the harvest is typically taken by  
19 Federally qualified users. Wolf harvest is affected by  
20 local weather conditions and wolf abundance. Deep and  
21 persistent snow can reduce access to many of the  
22 logging roads on the island. Typically, the reported  
23 wolf harvest in Unit 2 has been highest from December  
24 through February.  
25  
26 Since 1985, most wolves, 59 percent,  
27 have been harvested by hunters and trappers working  
28 from boats with harvest typically occurring on State  
29 managed tidelands below the mean high tide line.  
30 Harvests by month can be found in Table 2 and method of  
31 transportation used to harvest can be found in Table 3.  
32  
33 Person and Russell identified illegal  
34 harvest of collared wolves during their study period of  
35 1993-1995 and again in 1999-2004. As a result, a  
36 mortality rate of 47 percent due to human causes was  
37 categorized as illegal harvest. Roffler in more recent  
38 research has suggested that 38 percent of the study  
39 wolves have died from human causes that were  
40 unreported. However, testimony from Federally  
41 qualified users to this Council seems to not suggest  
42 high levels of illegal harvest.  
43  
44 If adopted, this proposal would  
45 increase the harvest quota on Federal public lands in  
46 Unit 2 which would increase harvest opportunity for  
47 Federally qualified subsistence users. The proposal  
48 does not increase the number of wolves available to be  
49 taken from non-Federal lands under State regulations.  
50

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1 The proposal would create divergence between State and  
2 Federal regulations, and would pose extreme difficulty  
3 for State and Federal managers, requiring a management  
4 of two separate quotas within the unit.  
5  
6 Based on the past population decline  
7 from a similar harvest quota, the proposed harvest  
8 quota could possibly likely lead to unsustainable  
9 harvest in the future.  
10  
11 Staff recommendation is to oppose  
12 Proposal WP18-04. Since the proposal only increases  
13 available harvest on Federal lands, management of  
14 separate harvest quotas between State lands and Federal  
15 lands will be difficult for both State and Federal  
16 managers as well as confusing for hunters and trappers  
17 trying to harvest from those quotas.  
18  
19 Although recent action by the Board of  
20 Game reduced the quota to 20 percent, lower wolf  
21 population estimates prior to the past couple of  
22 seasons have resulted in further restrictions to the  
23 quota to allow for sustainable harvest opportunity of  
24 wolves in the unit while rebuilding the population.  
25  
26 Increasing the harvest quota back to 30  
27 percent could likely recreate those past conservation  
28 concerns for wolves. As such, adopting the proposal  
29 could violate established principles of wildlife  
30 management being contrary to the conservation mandates  
31 of Title VIII of ANILCA.  
32  
33 Thank you.  
34  
35 That concludes my presentation.  
36  
37 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Jeff. Are  
38 there any questions for Mr. Reeves from the Council.  
39  
40 Mr. Hernandez.  
41  
42 MR. HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Mr.  
43 Chairman. Yeah, Jeff, I was just kind of wondering,  
44 looking into at least the near future, there's been a  
45 lot of efforts put into trying to determine wolf  
46 populations. Of course it's an expensive proposition.  
47 A lot of research involved.  
48  
49 Do you foresee that these efforts will  
50

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1 continue at least into the near future so we can  
2 continue to monitor the wolf populations?  
3  
4 MR. REEVES: Mr. Chairman. Mr.  
5 Hernandez. It would be wonderful if it can. A lot of  
6 the population work is driven by the State, so perhaps  
7 a State representative could probably answer what they  
8 believe the future in the wolf population work in the  
9 unit is.  
10  
11 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Any other questions.  
12  
13 Ms. Phillips then Ms. Needham.  
14  
15 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Chairman  
16 Bangs. Jeff, the Interagency Wolf Habitat Management  
17 Program recommendations for Game Management Unit 2,  
18 Page 63, under recommendations says: Maintain  
19 flexibility in quota management to alter quotas on a  
20 yearly basis to ensure wolf population and harvest  
21 sustainability.  
22  
23 Has this been considered under the  
24 Staff analysis that maybe perhaps a 20-30 percent range  
25 would fall in line with this recommendation?  
26  
27 MR. REEVES: Mr. Chairman. Ms.  
28 Phillips. You know, as it was stated yesterday,  
29 basically the Interagency Wolf Habitat Management  
30 recommendations are supposed to be more of a guide for  
31 the decision-makers. In the early stages of my  
32 analysis, this document was still being finalized, so I  
33 did not bring that into my analysis. Ideally, I  
34 believe if Forest Service leadership wanted this to  
35 happen, this is a guide that could say, okay, yearly  
36 population work to determine these quotas does need to  
37 occur.  
38  
39 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Ms. Needham and then  
40 Mr. Schroeder.  
41  
42 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
43 Jeff, the analysis indicates that 30 percent take on a  
44 healthy population of wolves would be appropriate. How  
45 do managers assess what the healthy population is that  
46 30 percent can be taken out of to remain a sustainable  
47 population?  
48  
49 MR. REEVES: Mr. Chairman. Ms.  
50

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1 Needham. Perhaps the State might be able to better  
2 explain that one, especially since it was the Board of  
3 Game that in 2000 raised the harvest quota to  
4 30 percent. I was not on the island in the year 2000  
5 when that happened. I know for now it's -- the  
6 micro-management of the quota has been very important.  
7  
8 And from the Forest Service perspective  
9 and our involvement, the harvest quota percents that  
10 are determined by the Board of Game has -- there's a  
11 (indiscernible) in those and why they're determined the  
12 way they are.  
13  
14 Ideally in the future hopefully there  
15 could be a management plan crafted that could maybe  
16 suggest something that, okay, if a population is this  
17 level, that we could have a 30 percent harvest and if  
18 it's at this level, then maybe it needs to be 20.  
19 Until then we just have to go with what's in  
20 regulation. Unfortunately, over time, since 2000 it's  
21 been dropped down to 20 percent.  
22  
23 I hope I answered your question.  
24  
25 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Follow up.  
26  
27 MS. NEEDHAM: Yeah, you talked around  
28 it a lot, but I think the short answer to the question  
29 is there might not be a particular level of population.  
30  
31 Terry, did you want to address that  
32 before I ask my next follow-up question?  
33  
34 MR. SUMINSKI: Ms. Needham, through the  
35 Chair. I think the Department is prepared to have a  
36 presentation that will get into more of the details of  
37 how the estimates are calculated and things like that.  
38 So some of these questions might be better answered by  
39 the State.  
40  
41 Thank you.  
42  
43 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Jeff, to  
44 follow up on that. If the quota or the harvest levels  
45 would be raised to 30 percent, are there mechanisms in  
46 place for when wolf populations become less -- or  
47 there's a concern with respect to the previous fall  
48 population that the quota could be less than that 30  
49  
50

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1 percent rather than having to always harvest at that 30  
2 percent? If so, if there is that mechanism, in the 15  
3 to 17 years that it was at 30 percent, was that ever  
4 implemented?

5 MR. REEVES: Mr. Chair. Ms. Needham.  
6 Again, probably the State could probably better answer  
7 that. I don't recall though in my literature review of  
8 seeing anything that during the times when there was  
9 the higher quota into a season that the 30 percent was  
10 reduced down. I don't think that occurred until these  
11 past recent years.

12 Hopefully the State can further clarify  
13 that for you.

14 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Jeff.

15 Mr. Schroeder.

16 MR. SCHROEDER: Hi, Jeff. This is Bob  
17 Schroeder. It's good talking with you again. I'm  
18 wondering about the harvest population estimates. I  
19 guess in my mind I see that if we have perfect  
20 knowledge, we'd see that the number of wolves in a  
21 given environment would vary with or without any  
22 hunting or trapping pressure over the year. There's a  
23 life cycle thing of denning, birth, wolves being kicked  
24 out of packs and possibly not finding an environment  
25 that allows him to join another pack.

26 So I'm just wondering -- perhaps the  
27 State will get to that in their presentation, but I'm  
28 wondering if you had any comments on that. This has to  
29 do with the population of wolves at different times of  
30 the year and when the estimate is made. Thank you.

31 MR. REEVES: Yeah, Mr. Chairman, Mr.  
32 Schroeder. Hopefully the -- I think the State will  
33 provide you more information. I mean if it's talking  
34 about the variability like during the year of how the  
35 population moves around, I'm sure they could probably  
36 answer that through some of their telemetry work.  
37 They're the primary driver on the population work, so  
38 they could probably let you know too from the DNA  
39 standpoint of what they're finding in the hair-boards  
40 too.

41 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Mr. Hernandez.

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1 MR. HERNANDEZ: Thank you. I have a  
2 more basic question kind of regarding the regulation  
3 itself currently as written. On the Federal regulation  
4 it says that Federal hunting and trapping  
5 season may be closed when the combined Federal-State  
6 harvest quota is reached. In the State regulation it  
7 says that the annual harvest of wolves in Unit 2 should  
8 not exceed 20 percent of the population estimate.

9 It appears to me that as of right now  
10 the Federal system does not actually have that 20  
11 percent stipulation in its regulation. That we only do  
12 a -- is it true that we just do kind of some kind of  
13 agreement with the State that we will align our  
14 regulation with theirs at the time the quota is set?  
15 Could you maybe clarify that.

16 MR. REEVES: Mr. Chairman. Mr.  
17 Hernandez. You're correct in your observations that  
18 the Federal regulation just states that it would be closed  
19 when the combined quota is reached and that's kind of  
20 how our in-season manager's delegation says that he's  
21 supposed to close when the quota is reached.

22 So the State's regulation kind of  
23 governs how much harvest can occur, so that's why we  
24 don't have it specifically spelled out. The way that  
25 we've just always dealt with it is we've typically --  
26 I've always been in constant communication with the  
27 local State manager when we had one here on the island.  
28 Finding out what's happening and providing those  
29 updates to the in-season manager.

30 Typically that has neared the point of  
31 getting close. We've always tried to take a joint  
32 action concurrent with the State of Alaska. The wolf  
33 sealing occurs through point of sealer, so the State is  
34 getting the updates weekly or however, so that's why I  
35 maintain the communication with them. So basically  
36 it's, okay, looking at harvest rates till now, here's  
37 probably -- it's going to get hit at this point, so  
38 let's start the process now and be able to give  
39 trappers time to get their gear out.

40 So in the past it's kind of been --  
41 you'll notice that sometimes it might have fallen short  
42 of the quota by a couple animals. Well, that's because  
43 it was anticipated that it was going to happen. Then  
44 we had cases like last year where we took the action,

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1 but it turned out that a handful more had been taken in  
2 the reporting period than showed that.

3 So I hope that answers what you were  
4 looking for.

5 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Follow up.

6 MR. HERNANDEZ: Yeah. Thank you, Jeff.  
7 I think it does. So what it's telling me right now is  
8 that currently the Federal season has a season length  
9 and a bag limit for hunting, but there is no harvest  
10 quota set under Federal regulations currently.

11 MR. REEVES: Mr. Chairman. Mr.  
12 Hernandez. The quota is set jointly and so, especially  
13 the last few years, it's been announced jointly by both  
14 the State and the Forest Service on a joint  
15 announcement because the Forest Service recognizes that  
16 that quota will apply to the Federal regulations as  
17 well as the State. So basically it's one set number of  
18 wolves for two different trapping seasons, a State and  
19 Federal trapping season, as well as two separate  
20 hunting seasons, a State and a Federal hunting season.

21 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Jeff. Any  
22 other questions for Mr. Reeves.

23 Ms. Phillips.

24 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Chairman  
25 Bangs. So to follow up on that line of questioning,  
26 how would this proposal, if it were implemented, affect  
27 that joint decision-making?

28 MR. REEVES: Mr. Chairman. Ms.  
29 Phillips. To tell you the truth I don't know how to  
30 answer that. Basically I can see how it might look  
31 easy. Okay, here's this population estimate, so 30  
32 percent is this number, 20 percent is this number, but  
33 then it would be really hard -- I guess if you had a  
34 population estimate of 100, which means 30 could come  
35 off of Federal lands, but only 20 could come off of  
36 State lands, so how do you sit there and manage for  
37 those 10 wolves extra that could come off of Federal  
38 lands when we know if 20 gets hit, then you've already  
39 closed the State. It's one I just can't explain it.

40 I mean you probably hear me stuttering

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1 and trying to explain this. It just seems like it's  
2 going to be harder to effectively manage at the  
3 management level, but also it just seems like it's just  
4 too hard to try to have the user be able to understand,  
5 okay, well, if I have harvesting here have I exceeded  
6 the quota, you know. That gets down to the other point  
7 is that a majority of the wolves tend to be taken on  
8 State land or non-Federal lands.

9 If there's a suggestion of how to make  
10 this work, we would be all for it.

11 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Jeff. Any  
12 other questions.

13 Terry.

14 MR. SUMINSKI: Just a little follow up  
15 on Mr. Hernandez's question. The way the regulation is  
16 stated now is that basically the Board has directed us  
17 to work with the State to establish one quota. That's  
18 what it says.

19 As far as Jeff's answer to Mrs.  
20 Phillips' question, it just shows how difficult it is  
21 and especially how important it is to work with the  
22 State to manage this population together. They're the  
23 lead on the population estimate and a lot of the  
24 research and it's just imperative that we work together  
25 in some fashion. I think Jeff's answer of how these  
26 two different quotas of work kind of highlights how  
27 important it is to work with ADF&G.

28 Thank you.

29 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Terry.

30 Cathy.

31 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
32 This might be more of a policy-based question, Jeff,  
33 but if we were to recommend this proposal to move  
34 forward, would we be able to include in that  
35 recommendation that implementation be delayed until the  
36 potential Board of Game like action could occur or  
37 would occur? I mean my understand is that if we  
38 decided to recommend that this proposal be adopted by  
39 the Federal Subsistence Board, that we would also  
40 follow that up with a proposal to the Board of Game.

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1 So I guess my question is just a matter  
2 of procedure or policy of whether or not the Federal  
3 Subsistence Board could delay implementing that 30  
4 percent raise until the Board of Game also did the same  
5 thing.

6  
7 MR. REEVES: Mr. Chairman. Ms.  
8 Needham. You know, I'm not going to speak on behalf of  
9 the Board. If there's someone from OSM there that  
10 might be able to answer that. I think there may have  
11 been things in the past where that kind of strategy has  
12 been taken, but I don't know so I'm not going to say  
13 something and then be wrong about it. Hopefully  
14 someone from OSM might be able to chime in on that.

15  
16 You're correct in that a Board of Game  
17 process would be a very good route to go on this.  
18 Hopefully the OSM can answer your question.

19  
20 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Go ahead.

21  
22 MS. HARDIN: Mr. Chair. This is  
23 Jennifer Hardin from the Office of Subsistence  
24 Management for the record. Regarding your question, I  
25 believe it was Ms. Phillips' question or Ms. Needham's  
26 question. Yes, the Board could take any number of  
27 actions on a proposal such as this. There have been  
28 cases when the Board has chosen to defer action on  
29 proposals for a later time including to see what the  
30 Board of Fish or the Board of Game does on companion  
31 proposals. So that's not outside the realm of  
32 possibilities. As Jeff noted, it's impossible for us  
33 to know what action they would take.

34  
35 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you.

36  
37 Ms. Phillips.

38  
39 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Chairman  
40 Bangs. To follow up on Cathy's question. When could a  
41 proposal be submitted to the Board of Game for their  
42 consideration?

43  
44 CHAIRMAN BANGS: That would be a  
45 question -- we'd have to find out what cycle they would  
46 address that and I think the State would probably fill  
47 us in on that.

48  
49 Patty.  
50

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1 Thank you.

2  
3 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you. So is  
4 there any questions for Jeff or Terry.

5  
6 Mr. Howard.

7  
8 MR. HOWARD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.  
9 I'm wondering if any of these Federally recognized  
10 tribes have put a proposal before the Board of Game  
11 trying to address the wolf population in that area.  
12 The reason I'm asking is Angoon has put several  
13 proposals forward to the Board of Fish and they've  
14 never seen the light of day. This could be their way  
15 of addressing the fact that they're being ignored by  
16 the process, I guess, so to speak.

17  
18 So do you have an idea if they've put  
19 proposals trying to address this issue before the Board  
20 of Game?

21  
22 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay, Mr. Howard,  
23 we're addressing questions to the presentation. We'll  
24 get into deliberation and discussion after we get the  
25 rest of the presentations. Would that be -- is that  
26 okay? Do you understand what I'm saying? We need to  
27 address the questions to the Federal agency's analysis.

28  
29 MR. HOWARD: Okay. Thank you, Mr.  
30 Chair.

31  
32 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Any other questions  
33 for Mr. Reeves or Mr. Suminski.

34  
35 (No comments)

36  
37 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Hearing none. Thank  
38 you, Terry and thank you, Jeff.

39  
40 MR. SUMINSKI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

41  
42 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Is there any reports  
43 from consultations with the tribes or ANCSA  
44 corporations?

45  
46 MR. LIND: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.  
47 Council Members. Orville Lind, Native Liaison for the  
48 Office of Subsistence Management. As I said earlier,  
49 the only information was from Mr. Kitka and in Unit 2  
50

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1 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Chairman  
2 Bangs. If it were to be amended to a range of 20 to 30  
3 and then that allows for an emergency action, that  
4 would fall within a 20 to 30 range. So if we were to  
5 adopt this proposal, amend it to a 20 percent to 30  
6 percent range, so the Staff or the biologist would  
7 decide when to close that. Would that be an emergency  
8 closure if you're falling in the range or how would  
9 that decision be made.

10  
11 MR. SUMINSKI: Through the Chair. Ms.  
12 Phillips. The existing State regulation talks up to 20  
13 percent, so anything less than 20 percent the quota  
14 could be set at. The Federal proposal is up to 30  
15 percent, so that incorporates what you're saying. So  
16 anything 30 percent or less could be set as a quota.

17  
18 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Mr. Reifensuhl.

19  
20 MR. REIFENSTUHL: This kind of seems  
21 more like deliberation in modifying the proposal, but  
22 if you're okay with that, I have a comment.

23  
24 CHAIRMAN BANGS: I think we're trying  
25 to find out how this is going to work with the State  
26 and Federal misalignment. I think that's the intent of  
27 the discussion, but thank you.

28  
29 MR. REIFENSTUHL: I understand that.  
30 So then I guess I would suggest if we go with the  
31 research the State has, the way to change the proposal  
32 would be align with the State regulation and then put  
33 in a Board of Game proposal to raise it to 30 percent  
34 or even if it goes to 30 percent by somebody else's  
35 initiative, then we're already aligned and it absolves  
36 us of the problem that Jeff and Terry are explaining  
37 here.

38  
39 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you. Any other  
40 questions.

41  
42 Mr. Yeager.

43  
44 MR. YEAGER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
45 Since we're discussing 20 or 30 percent of a quota, I  
46 think for me personally it would be nice to see how  
47 those populations are established and have Fish and  
48 Game give their presentation. That would be very  
49 helpful in taking this discussion any further.  
50

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1 also about the wolf population uncertainty and also the  
2 predation issue.

3  
4 That's all I have, Mr. Chair.

5  
6 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you. Any  
7 questions.

8  
9 (No comments)

10  
11 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Hearing none. I think  
12 we'll move on to the agency comments from the Alaska  
13 Department of Fish and Game.

14  
15 MR. SCOTT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.  
16 Council Members. For the record, my name is Ryan  
17 Scott. I'm the Regional Wildlife Supervisor for the  
18 Southeast Region, Division of Wildlife Conservation.  
19 Joining me at the table is Tom Schumacher, the  
20 Management Coordinator for the region as well.

21  
22 I have hopefully not too long of a  
23 presentation. It's some of the stuff this Council --  
24 we've brought to the Council before. It also  
25 incorporates some updated information throughout last  
26 season's harvest and population estimate and this is  
27 very similar to a presentation we provided in Craig on  
28 October 16th just last month with the community and  
29 interested parties.

30  
31 I also wrote down many, many questions  
32 that I figure are going to come my way, so I'll do my  
33 best to answer all those and hopefully this will be  
34 informative as well as answer some of them as we go.  
35 I'm probably going to mess this up a few times so bear  
36 with me a little bit.

37  
38 We covered quite a bit over what the  
39 difference is between the two seasons. You can see  
40 with the State season our seasons run concurrently.  
41 Hunting and trapping December 1 through March 31. But  
42 as we've seen over many times going through this  
43 information, the majority of the wolf harvest doesn't  
44 start to occur until December. At present, we have  
45 four wolves sealed from Unit 2 in the current  
46 regulatory year.

47  
48 A quick chronology of what happens. It  
49 just reaffirms what we just talked about. January,  
50

7 (Pages 180 to 183)

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1 February and December are the primary months for the  
2 harvest.

3  
4 This is a long-term outlook of harvest  
5 in Unit 2 wolves beginning in 2013, '14, '15 and '16.  
6 Emergency orders and special actions through the OSM  
7 and the U.S. Forest Service were used to close the  
8 season early by emergency order when the quotas were  
9 reached.

10  
11 You can see here a table of the wolf  
12 density estimates for the study area, the first column  
13 on the left, and then the middle column is the  
14 estimated number of animals within the study area, and  
15 then extrapolating that into Game Management Unit 2 as  
16 a whole the number of wolves that were estimated.

17  
18 The map to the far right demonstrates  
19 the overall study area. This was greatly enlarged this  
20 past season through a cooperative effort with Hydaburg  
21 Cooperative Association. In addition, we worked with  
22 the Nature Conservancy and Citizen Science Programs in  
23 the local schools and with teachers and students. All  
24 of those entities, including ADF&G and the Forest  
25 Service were out in the field collecting hair samples,  
26 utilizing the hair-board methodology that we've talked  
27 about extensively.

28  
29 That estimate was derived from a  
30 plethora of wolf samples that we received this year  
31 from all those groups. We sent in approximately 1,100  
32 hair samples to the lab, about three times more than we  
33 had ever sent before. We did experience some delays.  
34 The lab was a little bit overwhelmed, frankly, with the  
35 number of samples we sent in, plus they had some  
36 machinery break down, so it took us a little bit of  
37 time to get everything out on the street.

38  
39 We did not announce the quota for 2016  
40 until after September 1st. We had been in constant  
41 contact with the Forest Service kind of anticipating  
42 seeing that coming on the horizon to ensure that that  
43 was appropriate for them. They felt like they could  
44 hold on until we could get the best data possible.

45  
46 As soon as that number hit my desk I  
47 was in contact with the district ranger in Craig with  
48 the chairman of this Council as well as Mr. Douville  
49 out of Unit 2 and other interested parties and we also  
50

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1 set up consultation on the island as soon as we had  
2 those numbers and we could organize schedules and  
3 things like that.

4  
5 A lot of what I just said. About 60  
6 percent of Unit 2 is being sampled now. That's the  
7 main island, Prince of Wales. It's very true. We're  
8 not out on the outer islands in some of the other areas  
9 where access is difficult, but when we talk about  
10 sampling a specific unit, sampling 60 percent of an  
11 area is a lot. Generally speaking, in many resource  
12 programs you don't see that level.

13  
14 Using math and statistics, we  
15 extrapolate that out over the broad area and there's  
16 always going to be some concerns with that knowing that  
17 we're not always sampling every single wolf. We just  
18 can't. That's impossible. But we assume that the  
19 density of wolves will go up and down in somewhat a  
20 predictable fashion across the area.

21  
22 In our samples we detected 145 wolves,  
23 80 unique animals. This process requires that we need  
24 to re-catch wolves multiple times to get a pretty solid  
25 estimate. In that estimate 231 wolves – I'm going to  
26 flip back real quick. You can see that at the bottom  
27 we list a range of 192 to 285. So somewhere in there  
28 we know in that range we have a high level of certainty  
29 that the real number of wolves exists. Conventionally  
30 we use the midpoint of the estimate for the basis of  
31 the quota and that's been conventionally across many  
32 other types of programs.

33  
34 This year, unlike the last two or three  
35 years, we've allocated up to 20 percent of the  
36 population for harvest. What that translates into is  
37 46 wolves. As we've discussed many, many times the  
38 last few years, we've held back a proportion, 50  
39 percent of the harvest due to concerns about wolves we  
40 didn't know about. Not necessarily illegal harvest,  
41 but things that -- wounding loss or other information  
42 like that.

43  
44 Based on what it looks like this wolf  
45 population is doing, it is appropriate to harvest up to  
46 20 percent. That 20 percent is a conservative approach  
47 and it was designed that way and it was put in place  
48 that way as we noticed the decline in animals across  
49 the unit as well as concerns with an Endangered Species  
50

## Page 186

1 Act listing.

2  
3 I also put in there as a final bullet  
4 on this slide just additional camera data. Through  
5 some wonderful efforts of folks on the island as well  
6 as the Nature Conservancy Staff there, we're getting  
7 additional information from cameras that are being put  
8 out, remote cameras. We have thousands and thousands  
9 and thousands of wolf images from Prince of Wales  
10 Island.

11  
12 There are methodologies to use camera  
13 traps to come up with a density and a number estimate.  
14 We have not in this particular area and for this  
15 project we have not designed it to be used as such. So  
16 we've got tons of images. We're frankly not sure how  
17 to incorporate that all at this point.

18  
19 We can get some minimum numbers of  
20 wolves in certain areas. We're able to put cameras out  
21 at den locations. We can get at least initial glimpses  
22 of what pup production is going to be, but we don't  
23 know about survival. You know, we may see four or five  
24 pups, but we're not sure how many ultimately will make  
25 it to adulthood. But it is another avenue to be  
26 investigated as we go.

27  
28 We have found that the hair-boards work  
29 very well and I think this season actually demonstrates  
30 that when we submitted three times the number of  
31 samples than we had previously.

32  
33 So what's going on right now. The  
34 field season has begun and all parties again ADF&G  
35 staff, Forest Service, Hydaburg Cooperative Association  
36 and the Citizen Science Group, I believe, are off the  
37 ground now and going and the Nature Conservancy. So  
38 all the parties that were involved in last year's field  
39 work are at it again. We are focusing on the same  
40 study area as 2016 that expanded study area and  
41 utilizing many of the same nodes. These are areas that  
42 we place the hair-boards.

43  
44 We do have concerns with going over the  
45 20 percent. In regulation that is, as a Department of  
46 Fish and Game employee, that's as high as we can go.  
47 As Mr. Reeves mentioned during his presentation, we did  
48 go above the quota last year and that's something that  
49 we really don't want to do. We really want to be  
50

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1 careful with how we approach that. So I put how do we,  
2 all of us collectively, ADF&G, the RAC, Forest Service,  
3 trappers, hunters, how can we keep from doing that.

4  
5 And then again the current harvest as  
6 of just a few days ago we had four wolves sealed. Boyd  
7 Porter, who is in the audience with us, maintains very  
8 regular contact with the appointed sealers as well as  
9 Fish and Game staff in the Craig office. So we know  
10 relatively soon when we have a wolf that's been  
11 presented for sealing.

12  
13 There was one additional wolf that was  
14 called in, a vehicle strike, and somebody actually  
15 spent some time looking for it. The wolf was able to  
16 travel quite a ways and that has not been counted  
17 towards the quota.

18  
19 So I'm going to ask Mr. Schumacher to  
20 run through this part for you. This is our idea for  
21 helping us not go over that 20 percent. This was  
22 presented in Craig as well. It's a stab at what we are  
23 thinking about as far as how to manage for the harvest.

24  
25 MR. SCHUMACHER: For monitoring  
26 harvest, the reason that that's important for us to do  
27 is because the perception outside of this room and  
28 maybe outside of Alaska is that we're unable to manage  
29 harvest based on what happened last year. Last year we  
30 based our harvest monitoring on sealing dates.  
31 Everyone here is aware there's a two-week sealing  
32 window.

33  
34 Recoverable from a trap you have two  
35 weeks to seal it. That puts a two-week time lag into  
36 what we know about has been harvested. So when we find  
37 out that we're getting close to whatever the quota is,  
38 the traps are in the woods for another two weeks still  
39 or trapping may have gone on for another two weeks.

40  
41 So what we're most interested in is  
42 knowing when a wolf steps in a trap as we approach the  
43 quota. So this year it's 46, so we want to know when  
44 wolf number 46 steps in a trap so we can close the  
45 season and not exceed that amount. Relying on sealing  
46 data puts a two-week time lag makes it very difficult.  
47 We thought this year we would try to project when  
48 harvest of animals will occur based on last year's data  
49 or based on a number of previous years' data.  
50



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1 The idea this year is to look at past  
2 harvest data. Sealing records do not indicate the date  
3 the wolf was harvested. So what we would do is take  
4 the month the wolf was harvested -- actually we have a  
5 sealing date, excuse me. So we'll have a date the wolf  
6 was sealed. We'll back that two weeks assuming that  
7 trapper held onto it for two weeks or the wolf was in a  
8 trap for some period.

10 Then on December 15th we'll look at how  
11 many wolves are sealed and give us the number of wolves  
12 that were trapped through the end of November. Then  
13 based on harvest rate calculated on previous years'  
14 data, we will project by when the quota would be  
15 reached by when the last wolf would step in a trap,  
16 then we could issue an emergency order closing the  
17 season for that date.

18 There are some concerns with that.  
19 What if by then your harvest is much lower than what  
20 the quota is. We can reopen the season, but numerous  
21 trappers pointed out to us in Craig that's very  
22 inconvenient and difficult for them to get back out in  
23 the field. So I guess we're still pondering our  
24 options and looking for other ideas about how we can  
25 monitor harvest so it stays under the quota so we  
26 appear that we can manage the population effectively  
27 but still harvest up near the quota.

28 We'd be happy to entertain any ideas  
29 anyone has afterwards.

30 MR. SCOTT: There's still lots of  
31 slides.

32 (Laughter)

33 MR. SCHUMACHER: Oh, I was not aware of  
34 this. These are some slides that came from the  
35 presentation in Craig. The reason it's important to be  
36 able to appear that we manage harvest within a system  
37 is because one of the reasons a wolf can be listed  
38 under the Endangered Species Act is inadequacy of  
39 existing regulatory mechanisms. When we exceed harvest  
40 quotas, it appears the regulatory mechanisms are  
41 inadequate.

42 I don't think it's in anyone's interest  
43 in this room to invite another endangered species  
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1 petition. Everyone here should be aware that the  
2 previous petition, while it was found not warranted by  
3 the Fish and Wildlife Service, the groups that filed it  
4 have also requested the entire administrative record  
5 from that process and are likely combing through that  
6 looking for things like problems with process, errors  
7 of fact and looking for new information that may  
8 influence the outcome of that decision.

10 Last year's excess harvest over the  
11 established quota was also mentioned in a lawsuit of  
12 wolves in Montana. So it's important for everybody to  
13 realize that the Unit 2 population of wolves is in the  
14 national spotlight and we do need to be careful about  
15 how we manage it. We do need to give both the  
16 appearance and in fact be able to manage it within the  
17 regulatory system that's established.

18 So that's the real basis for why we  
19 need a good system of regulating the harvest and  
20 closing the season when we're approaching the quota.  
21 Our goal is to achieve but not exceed the quota.  
22 Monitoring harvest using sealing records didn't work,  
23 so what's a better idea.

24 This is essentially what I explained  
25 before. We'll assume that wolves are trapped at the  
26 same rate as they were in 2016 or we can incorporate a  
27 harvest rate for a number of years. Last year's was  
28 the only years I calculated that for. Beginning on  
29 December 1st wolves were harvested at a very steady  
30 rate, which is good for management. It was 1.6 wolves  
31 per day. It was almost a straight line on the graph.

32 So we can incorporate other years of  
33 data and see if that pattern holds true in other years  
34 or use several years data to calculate a harvest rate.  
35 The important thing is we want to have some idea of  
36 when wolves are caught in traps not sealed because  
37 sealed puts us two weeks behind and leads to exceeding  
38 the quota.

39 This is a graph of harvest from last  
40 year. You'll see harvest is very low from when the  
41 Federal hunting season is open in September and the  
42 Federal trapping season opens the middle of November.  
43 Once you get to December 1st the harvest really takes  
44 off in earnest and it's a pretty straight line, so that  
45 means a pretty constant rate of harvest, which is  
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1 actually an advantage for managing.

2 This is our idea for managing harvest.  
3 We'll use number of wolves sealed by close of business  
4 on December 14th as the total harvest through November  
5 30th. We'll project the season closure date by adding  
6 1.6 wolves to that total. On the date that based on  
7 that harvest rate the quota 46 will be achieved, we'll  
8 issue an emergency order right then in the middle of  
9 December and say it's going to close on such and such a  
10 date. That will give everybody plenty of warning.

11 This is an example. On December 15th  
12 let's say we have eight wolves sealed, so that would be  
13 eight wolves taken through November 30th. On December  
14 1st we've got 1.6 wolves per day to that eight wolves  
15 and that would lead to another 24 days to reach 46. So  
16 we would close the season on December 24th. We'd issue  
17 an EO on December 15th saying the season closes  
18 December 24th.

19 That's essentially a summary of why we  
20 need to manage within the quota and an idea for how to  
21 do it. We realize that's not a popular idea with  
22 trappers and it would cause them some difficulties  
23 especially if we don't achieve the quota by the day we  
24 close the season. So at this point we're looking for  
25 further input, but the season is coming up and we do  
26 need to do something pretty quickly.

27 Back to Ryan.

28 MR. SCOTT: Thank you, Tom. These are  
29 just to wrap this up. So if this proposal is adopted,  
30 Federally qualified hunters and trappers would be able  
31 to harvest up to 30 percent of the most recent  
32 estimate.

33 I wanted to take a minute and just read  
34 from the State Fish and Game codified language. Our  
35 guidance or our requirements in this realm. It comes  
36 from 5 AAC 92.008 harvest guideline levels. (1)  
37 wolves: the annual harvest of wolves in Unit 2 should  
38 not exceed 30 percent of the unit wide, preseason  
39 population as estimated by the Department. So at  
40 present we can provide up to 20 percent.

41 The next two bullets just walk you  
42 through what currently both the State and Federal  
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1 hunters and trappers are adhering to. The 20 percent of  
2 the estimate. A joint harvest quota has been in place  
3 since 1997. A list of our concerns with this proposal.  
4 You know, there is some potential for overharvest.  
5 We're still handling the population somewhat gently.  
6 The good news is numbers are going up. I mean at least  
7 from that perspective.

8 Recognizing that there are concerns  
9 with too many wolves and that's not what I'm inclined  
10 there as far as numbers are going up. In the realm of  
11 wolf management and trying to ensure that we have  
12 sustainable wolf numbers as well as address user  
13 group's concerns, having a few more wolves at this  
14 point in time isn't a bad thing.

15 There are concerns with land management  
16 and who hunters and trappers -- Prince of Wales is a  
17 big island. The majority of it and the majority of  
18 Unit 2 is Federally managed lands, but there is a  
19 patchwork of both State and private lands as well.

20 And then enforcement, as you can see in  
21 some of the comments that have been made, I'm not sure  
22 how many enforcement officials are on the island at  
23 this point. In the past there were two wildlife  
24 troopers as well as a Forest Service LEO, but we have  
25 had some turnover in staff at least on the trooper  
26 side.

27 So currently the State opposes Proposal  
28 WP19-04 because of concerns that potentially any  
29 harvest will exceed at least the State regulated  
30 harvest limit.

31 I included this slide too. There's a  
32 lot going on here and most of the folks here have seen  
33 this before except for the bottom one. It's just a  
34 history of the harvest management on Prince of Wales  
35 beginning prior to 1997. Ms. Perry has this  
36 presentation and if you'd like hard copies I can also  
37 ensure that you get those.

38 I'll be happy to answer questions or I  
39 could just go down the list of questions I started and  
40 answer them as we go.

41 Thank you for your time, Mr. Chairman  
42 and Council.  
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1 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you for your  
2 presentation.

3 Did you have a question, Mr. Hernandez?

4 MR. HERNANDEZ: Yeah, Mr. Chairman.  
5 During the course of the presentation I kind of came up  
6 with at least one question. In the wildlife regulatory  
7 process, I don't know if it's similar to fisheries  
8 regulation where something we deal with on a regular  
9 basis is the season is set and during in-season  
10 management they do an extension of the season. Is an  
11 actual extension of the season a possibility in  
12 wildlife management as well or is it more complicated  
13 than that?

14 If you want to set a closing date for a  
15 season once you feel you're getting close to the  
16 guideline harvest, but it's kind of understood that  
17 with new information coming in you can easily just  
18 extend that season for a period of time. You know, in-  
19 season action. Is it that simple or more complicated  
20 for wildlife?

21 MR. SCOTT: Through the Chair. Member  
22 Hernandez. It's possible to do that through emergency  
23 order action. It's not something that I'm aware of  
24 having been done for this particular species, but for  
25 other species it has been done. I think it kind of  
26 gets back a little bit to the presentation we heard  
27 from Kristy Tibbles yesterday, the Executive Director  
28 of the Board of Game. There is a process that it would  
29 have to go through, but the potential is there.

30 The same mechanism would apply should  
31 we go down the road of estimating when we would reach  
32 that guideline harvest level and closing the season.  
33 We would use an emergency order to actually open it  
34 back up potentially if there's a sufficient number of  
35 wolves available for harvest.

36 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you.

37 Ms. Needham.

38 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
39 How many times has the quota been exceeded much like it  
40 happened in 2016? Over the time that you've set the  
41 quota, how many times has it got to the point that it's  
42

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1 actually exceeded like it did in 2016?

2 MR. SCOTT: Through the Chair. Member  
3 Needham. Last year was the first time since the quotas  
4 had been fairly restrictive. I could take a minute and  
5 look back through the harvest history. I don't know  
6 the answer to that off the top of my head, but in very  
7 small print I do have that probably.

8 MS. NEEDHAM: I appreciate the slide  
9 about the Endangered Species Act and why you have to  
10 manage to a certain level with respect to that. In our  
11 public testimony, which we'll get to eventually as  
12 well, there's a perception that the quota in 2016 was  
13 exceeded two and a half times the quota. It was a  
14 harvest of 29. In my mind, I see that as the two and a  
15 half times refers more to the guideline harvest level.

16 So would the State in setting that  
17 quota at -- which was 22 for 2016, would you say it was  
18 exceeded two and a half times?

19 MR. SCOTT: Through the Chair. Member  
20 Needham. No, I wouldn't. I wouldn't say it was  
21 exceeded two and a half times. The regulation gives us  
22 up to 20 percent. As it came out last year with the  
23 estimate we had, that was 22 wolves. We established a  
24 quota, a joint quota with the District and the Forest  
25 Service of 11 wolves. I mean that's the number that I  
26 believe people are going off of.

27 Again, that was done very  
28 conservatively as we've done the last several years.  
29 If you look at the 20 percent, it would have been 22  
30 wolves, so an additional seven wolves were harvested  
31 beyond that and in addition to that we had a wolf get  
32 run over that we knew about. So really there were 30  
33 wolves that were dead that we were aware of.

34 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you.

35 Mr. Douville and then Mr. Hernandez.

36 MR. DOUVILLE: By the same token, you  
37 deducted 50 percent from the previous year's quota that  
38 wasn't taken. Illegal harvest were never documented.  
39 So there was like six you could have added onto last  
40 year's quota and you would have been right smack on in  
41 my opinion.  
42

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1 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Don.

2 MR. HERNANDEZ: A similar question, the  
3 question I had. I mean what happened last year kind of  
4 calls into question, you know, your 50 percent  
5 reduction for unreported take. I guess I'm just  
6 wondering for this year are you still committed to that  
7 50 percent reduction? Also in your meetings down in  
8 Craig, what were the discussions along that line for  
9 this coming year?

10 MR. SCOTT: Through the Chair. Member  
11 Hernandez. No. We have provided -- we're looking at  
12 the 20 percent. We want to harvest at or near those 46  
13 wolves. The discussion in Craig was very similar to  
14 discussions that we have all had as well and we all  
15 heard previously.

16 We have two studies that have indicated  
17 that there's X level of unreported mortality that we  
18 need to account for especially when we're looking at it  
19 in light of a declining population as well as a species  
20 that's being considered for Endangered Species Act  
21 listing.

22 This year really what's driving the  
23 quota is it appears we have a growing population and  
24 frankly that's something we've been told for the last  
25 couple years. We believe that's happening. So we  
26 believe that at least the 20 percent allocation for the  
27 harvest is appropriate for this year and that's what we  
28 intend to stick with. Again, we don't want to go over  
29 at this point.

30 MR. HERNANDEZ: So you're not making  
31 any reductions for unreported take this year, is that  
32 correct?

33 MR. SCOTT: Through the Chair. Member  
34 Hernandez. That is correct. Twenty percent of the  
35 current estimate is 46 wolves.

36 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you.

37 Ms. Needham and then Mr. Douville.

38 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So  
39 20 percent is appropriate for this year. If wolf  
40 populations are going up, the Department doesn't have  
41

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1 any mechanism to go above the 20 percent so when wolf  
2 populations continue to go up you're always going to be  
3 stuck at that twenty percent in terms of establishing a  
4 quota.

5 MR. SCOTT: Through the Chair. Member  
6 Needham. This gets to I believe a couple of different  
7 questions you had during testimony by OSM. So,  
8 correct. At this point in time we are held to the  
9 Administrative Code at 20 percent. You, I believe it  
10 was you and I apologize if I'm wrong, asked about what  
11 is an appropriate level of harvest. Throughout  
12 literature and other wolf research and management,  
13 harvesting up to 30 percent of a healthy wolf  
14 population is deemed acceptable. It won't cause  
15 irreparable harm to them.

16 The next jump would be a question about  
17 the Board of Game. So the cycle for the Alaska Board of  
18 Game in Southeast is coming up. It's right around the  
19 corner. Once we get through the first of the year  
20 we'll be in kind of proposal mode and proposals will be  
21 due to Board Support, Ms. Tibbles, by May I believe  
22 was the date that she indicated. Then the meeting  
23 would actually occur in January of 2019 for Southeast  
24 Alaska.

25 That would be an opportunity for the  
26 Regional Advisory Council or other parties to submit a  
27 proposal to the Board adjusting that percentage of  
28 harvest for Unit 2 wolves. I think though that  
29 actually shines the light on making it maybe a little  
30 bit more important right now that we get another good  
31 field season in to document, you know, truly is it  
32 continuing to grow.

33 You know, two field seasons is really  
34 hard for us to estimate a growth rate, but getting  
35 another field season that demonstrates an increase in  
36 numbers of wolves, that's pretty good information.  
37 That's good data. If something else is going on,  
38 that's also good data. It's good to know.

39 I also think it illuminates the  
40 importance of being able to manage the harvest. Now  
41 we're talking about 20 percent, which I believe we  
42 would all recognize is a conservative approach for a  
43 wolf population, but we're about to talk about 30  
44 percent. If we can't manage in those percentages, I  
45

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1 think that kind of paints us all in a little bit  
2 different light.

3  
4 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you.

5  
6 Mr. Douville.

7  
8 MR. DOUVILLE: I was just going to say  
9 that you deduct any documented illegal or otherwise  
10 take from that quota. I guess my question would it not  
11 be helpful to manage for a certain number that is  
12 deemed healthy wolf population instead of fooling  
13 around with these 30 percent, 20 percent?

14  
15 In my opinion, 175 would be a good,  
16 healthy number to manage for rather than to play with  
17 these numbers, which takes time. The Board of Game  
18 cycle is three years. The deer populations are  
19 sensitive to it. We miss out on subsistence  
20 opportunities. It sort of makes sense to manage for a  
21 number rather than to keep playing with percentages of  
22 take.

23  
24 MR. SCOTT: Through the Chair. Member  
25 Douville. You hit the nail on the head. That's  
26 something the Department, the Forest Service, I believe  
27 -- I don't want to put words in the Council's mouth for  
28 sure, but I believe the Council would welcome that.  
29 All the other interested parties. While the wheels  
30 turn slow sometimes, they do turn still.

31  
32 I believe that we are at the point  
33 where that's our next step. You're absolutely correct  
34 in that we're moving around, we're relying on an  
35 estimate that we may or may not be able to get every  
36 single year and that was a question Mr. Hernandez had  
37 asked. But having a number to manage for is extremely  
38 important.

39  
40 And then potentially using -- it was  
41 mentioned earlier I believe by Member Phillips looking  
42 at a range of 20 to 30 percent using a sliding scale  
43 depending on what the estimate was and what we know  
44 about wolf numbers based on not only research and data  
45 but also local knowledge and that's something that  
46 we've discussed a lot, is how to incorporate that.

47  
48 I don't know how to do it exclusively  
49 at this point, but I can tell you that over the last  
50

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1 end.

2  
3 So what it ultimately looks like, we  
4 don't really -- I don't know quite yet. The  
5 methodology that we use appears, based on review and  
6 results, to be the way to go, using the hair-boards. By  
7 having the additional help through Hydaburg Cooperative  
8 Association, TNC, the Citizen Science groups around  
9 Craig, Klawock, we can gather enough information, just  
10 samples in general, plus the recaptures that we can  
11 get, you know, an estimate that we have some confidence  
12 in.

13  
14 By having all those samples and an  
15 increased number of recaptures, we have more and more  
16 confidence in that range. The true numbers of wolves  
17 are in there somewhere. I would say likely that will  
18 be the process that we'll use going into the future,  
19 using the hair-boards and the DNA work.

20  
21 We have discussed internally how could  
22 we ratchet down the sampling that's required and still  
23 get the same level of confidence in the data and an  
24 estimate like that working with people that know a lot  
25 more about statistics than I do. That's one of the  
26 charges that they have is to help us come up with a way  
27 to do that.

28  
29 If we add up all the people right now  
30 just on the Fish and Game side, we've got three or four  
31 people every season. The Forest Service provides a  
32 couple folks every season if not more. Hydaburg has  
33 four or five folks that are focused on it. The  
34 teachers. There's a lot of man hours and money that  
35 goes into it.

36  
37 While this -- whatever the regulation,  
38 both on the Federal subsistence side and the State  
39 side, whatever that looks like in the next year or two,  
40 we're always going to have that regulation and there's  
41 always an interest in Unit 2 wolves from not only the  
42 wolf perspective but the user groups, which we all  
43 represent to one extent or another.

44  
45 We're looking for ways to actually  
46 continue to come up with a population estimate. We're  
47 just not sure how that's going to look given man hours  
48 and financial constraints into the future.

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1 three or four years working on this subject in Unit 2  
2 I've learned a lot about wolves in Unit 2 and what  
3 people are seeing and what people bring to the table. A  
4 process like that is going to take some time.

5  
6 This is a population and a species that  
7 people have some pretty strong feelings about across  
8 the gamut. It will involve the Council for sure, all  
9 the communities on Prince of Wales and other  
10 communities I would imagine will want to have input as  
11 well, the Department, the Forest Service, but it can be  
12 done.

13  
14 Ultimately, if there is a number or  
15 even a range of numbers, that will be determined  
16 biologically, socially. There's going to be a lot of  
17 input. But to wrap that all up, Member Douville, I  
18 think that's exactly what needs to happen at this  
19 point. We continue to move in that direction and the  
20 RAC will be very involved in that as we start that  
21 process.

22  
23 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr. Scott.

24  
25 Ms. Needham.

26  
27 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
28 Switching gears a little bit I have a few questions  
29 about population estimation for wolves. Currently we  
30 rely on data that the Department of Fish and Game  
31 provides us in terms of population assessment.  
32 According to our analysis and the information that was  
33 provided you guys are working on new research  
34 techniques for doing that, but there are also other  
35 ways to estimate population of wolves.

36  
37 What do you see in the future in terms  
38 of being able to continue to implement in order to  
39 estimate wolf populations within Unit 2 and then I'll  
40 probably have follow-ups once you tell me if you're  
41 going to continue certain particular research projects  
42 or not.

43  
44 MR. SCOTT: Through the Chair. Member  
45 Needham. Thank you for the question. As I alluded to  
46 just a minute ago, doing this is time intensive and  
47 financially intensive. Obviously we're in the field  
48 this year. The project is formally stated to end in  
49 2019, the funding for it. On the State end side will  
50

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1 In addition, we are branching out and  
2 looking at wolf research in other places and other  
3 types of wolf research. Diet analysis, which was  
4 another issue that was brought to Fish and Game, the  
5 Council, the Forest Service, with concerns about  
6 wolves in Southeast. We know in Unit 2 deer are the  
7 primary prey issue. What else do they eat. When  
8 they're not in a place that has high deer densities,  
9 what are they eating there. So we're looking at that.

10  
11 In addition, another concept or part of  
12 that puzzle how are wolves in Unit 2 related to wolves  
13 across Southeast Alaska. In the status assessment  
14 review by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service they  
15 looked at wolf populations from Northern British  
16 Columbia all the way up through Yakutat. So we're  
17 trying to look and see how are our wolves in Southeast  
18 Alaska related across the region.

19  
20 So those are a couple additional  
21 projects that are ongoing concurrently with the  
22 population estimate in Unit 2. We've been approached  
23 by the Organized Village of Kake. They are also  
24 interested in a population estimate for Unit 3 and I'll  
25 remind the Council that we do have two intensive  
26 management programs in Southeast. One in a portion of  
27 1A on Gravina Island near Ketchikan and then Central  
28 Southeast in Game Management Unit 3.

29  
30 So there's other wolf questions out  
31 there, but we're going to continue to work in Unit 2.  
32 I just don't see that going away in the near future.  
33 Probably not at the intensity that we see right now  
34 where every year we field lots of people.

35  
36 MR. SCHUMACHER: I might build on  
37 Ryan's answer a little bit. Through this last few  
38 years we've learned about the hair-board technique and  
39 we've learned what we can get with a certain number of  
40 hair-boards. Now we're to the point where the research  
41 project is really over.

42  
43 The one thing that remains to do is to  
44 look at that and see can we refine that so we can do  
45 less intensive sampling using the hair-boards and still  
46 come up with as good an answer. So we could reduce the  
47 labor involved and the cost involved potentially.  
48 That's one thing that our statistician is going to be  
49 looking at in the near future.

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There are also techniques that involve cameras and ways of sampling animals with trail cameras distributed around the study area, but those are new techniques that are in development now and I don't know specifics of how they would work with an animal that lives in social groups and is territorial. It would require probably a different sampling method than something like deer that are just all over the landscape and don't exclude each other from any particular place.

So I think in terms of how we estimate populations going into the future we're going to always try to use the best available technique available to us. Ideally, with the management plan that Ryan mentioned, is that if we come up with population goals, a range, we also need to come up with a way of establishing what the population is at any point in time and then we also need to come up with management strategies depending on where that population is relative to the desired range.

So those are the three elements of a management strategy that we need. The way we estimate the number of wolves in the study area or the island we always use the best way we can, but for right now the hair-board method is the best way we can. We may be able to refine that, but hopefully in the future if we can develop a management plan, we won't have to do an estimate every year.

We could do an estimate every few years just to make sure we're within the desired range. If it comes out that we're outside that range one way or another, hopefully we'll have the flexibility management-wise to manage appropriately to bring the population back into that range.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you.

Mr. Douville.

MR. DOUVILLE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We know not all the wolves hit the hair-boards. I mean certain ones hit it every time and some of them don't do it at all, so that work is -- you need to refine that some in my opinion. The number 89, today it's 231 in three years. We never believed it was 89. We believed it was twice that much, but your study showed

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confidence in the point estimate for the fall of 2016.

Member Douville pointed out another important factor in management is that this data, by the time we get around to using it, is a year old and the population has changed. So eventually we'd like to get something that provides a more timely estimate that we can incorporate into management that year, but at this point this is the best we have. Something like a photo census may be something that could get us to a more timely estimate, but we need to do some work before we can actually use that.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Do you have a follow up, Mike.

MR. DOUVILLE: Just a comment. It appears that even by your numbers that we were right in our assumption that there was twice as many.

MR. SCHUMACHER: I would say if it's within the confidence interval, that's possible.

CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you. Any other questions for the Department. Mr. Howard.

MR. HOWARD: I believe this is when I can ask that question, Mr. Chair. Do you have proposals submitted by the Federally recognized tribes during the Board of Game process concerning wolves?

MR. SCOTT: Through the Chair. Member Howard. I'm not aware of any specific to wolves, but I'd have to spend some time reviewing those.

MR. HOWARD: Also what process did you use to take away 50 percent of the allowable harvest based on unreported wolf kill?

MR. SCOTT: Through the Chair. Member Howard. We reviewed the two research projects, one by Person and one by Roffler. One of them estimated 47 percent of unreported mortality, one of them estimated 38 percent of the unreported mortality. Fifty percent was used as a very conservative approach. Again, during a time when the population was declining and there was concerns with a potential listing of the species.

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that with your hair sampling.

Something happened between then and now. In three years you have this number and it's quite high and this is last year's information. You need to remember that this isn't today's. This is last year we're basing it on, so we're lagging a year behind. That's a significant increase. Do you attribute that to better hair sampling or do you suppose they're actually increasing that much?

MR. SCHUMACHER: Through the Chair to Member Douville. Our estimates are just that, they're estimates. We use the midpoint of the estimate because that's the value that's most likely to be correct statistically speaking. The technique does not require that we get a sample from every wolf. It just requires that we get recaptures from the wolves that are sampled.

We'd have to go back quite a number of slides, but many of you may recall that the first year we did this 2013 we had an estimate of 221. I think, but the confidence interval, so the range in which the true value likely occurred, was very wide. If you look here on the screen, our 95 percent confidence interval, which is usually interpreted to mean that we're 95 percent sure the true value was within that range. The true value could have been anywhere from 130 to 378, but the value that was most likely to be correct based on the data that we had was 231.

The following year we had a much lower estimate, a midpoint of the estimate, but if you look at the confidence interval, the confidence interval overlaps with the previous years. It goes up to 159 whereas the other went down to 130. So statistically speaking, there's no difference between those two estimates. That's largely because there's such a large confidence interval with that 2013 estimate. We didn't have a lot of data and we didn't have a lot of recaptures.

As we get closer to the present day, we have a lot more data and a lot more recaptures and the confidence intervals, if you look at them, they keep getting smaller. This year's confidence interval is about 40 on either side, so that's very tight from a statistical point of view. So we have a good deal of

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MR. HOWARD: Also what are your thoughts on a manageable -- Mr. Douville picked 175, but I'm looking up here. You had a population of 89 and it still survived, so there must be some number there somewhere in your mind that we can settle on. I like this process and I like what I'm hearing and your willingness to meet halfway so to speak.

I had an uncle -- if I may share this, Mr. Chair. He was in Glacier Bay and he was having an issue with flies. They were driving him crazy. He said we should call Fish and Game and have them regulate the flies so we won't have a fly problem.

(Laughter)

MR. HOWARD: This process debates that comment, so I like this part of it and where we can find common ground. In your mind and in your data what do you think is a safe level to maintain this endangered species? I do this because the State of Alaska doesn't like Federal overreach, but part of the process is when the State doesn't address local concerns, then you have to bring the Federal government in to address the concern.

I could sit and talk about this all morning because you could also do DNA studies on the residents of district 2 and see if they're endangered as well. They must be concerned with the deer population. I'm not a scientist or a biologist, but I remember my former father-in-law on the Yukon River when there was a lot of rabbits, there's going to be a lot of lynx. There's a direct correlation there. They trend with each other.

So I'm sitting here and in my mind maybe the wolves, the black bear and the deer trend with each other. So if you put the whole puzzle together, you're going to see, well, the deer population is starting to decline, the wolf population is naturally going to decline at some point when they run out of deer to feed on or whatever they feed on.

It seems as though you guys have enough data from area 2 with all the conversation here you could put all these puzzles together. I kind of have my own life at home, so I don't have time to do it, so it's just a suggestion.

## Page 204

1 I guess the other question would be  
2 what process did they use to lower it to 20 percent?  
3

4 MR. SCOTT: Through the Chair. Member  
5 Howard. You know, I'm not going to paint myself into a  
6 hole and put a number out there. I very much  
7 appreciate Member Douville. He's consistently put that  
8 out. I agree with you 100 percent. We have some  
9 excellent information and data from not only our work  
10 but from the folks here, the folks that we've  
11 interacted with on Prince of Wales.  
12

13 These kinds of plans in my limited  
14 experience with them a lot goes into them. Not only  
15 biology, but social aspects of it goes into them and it  
16 should. I mean I think that's appropriate and we  
17 should consider the folks who live in Unit 2 and depend  
18 on deer for subsistence uses and we should also think  
19 about trappers that want to harvest wolves for selling  
20 the hides or just because they enjoy trapping. Even  
21 folks who enjoy watching a wolf as well.  
22

23 So those are all things that will feed  
24 into that. While certainly we can go out and number  
25 crunch and come up with an estimate of wolves, that's  
26 certainly not going to be the end of it. There's a lot  
27 that's going to go in there.  
28

29 To be very frank, I don't have a number  
30 in my mind and I'm hoping I stay that way until we get  
31 to the end of the process and I feel very confident  
32 that whatever number and/or range or harvest scale that  
33 collective we come up with and agree to, I anticipate  
34 having a lot of confidence in that and in the process.  
35

36 The second question you asked me was  
37 how did we come up with the 20 percent. It was at 30  
38 percent for a very long time. Prior to 1997 there was  
39 no harvest guideline for Unit 2 wolves. 97 to 2000 not  
40 to exceed 25 percent of the estimated harvest. Between  
41 2000 and 2013 we increased the guideline harvest up to  
42 30 percent.  
43

44 Again, it is recognized that harvesting  
45 up to 30 percent of a healthy wolf population -- and  
46 healthy means a lot of different things to a lot of  
47 different people. It kind of gets back to what would  
48 be the number.  
49  
50

## Page 205

1 And then beginning in 2014 I believe  
2 the guideline harvest level was reduced down to 20  
3 percent and that was done through a Board of Game  
4 process. I'm not sure which meeting that was done at,  
5 but it was done through the State's regulatory process  
6 with a lot of discussion with users and various groups  
7 concerning wolves in Unit 2.  
8

9 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you.  
10

11 Mr. Schroeder.  
12

13 MR. SCHROEDER: Thanks for a really  
14 good presentation on the wolf data. I also really  
15 appreciate the efforts of the Department to meet with  
16 people on Prince of Wales Island and to come before us  
17 in an open and collegial way.  
18

19 Earlier in our meeting we were dealing  
20 with deer. Somewhere buried in one of our reports we  
21 have an estimate that a healthy wolf consumes 26 deer a  
22 year. So if there are roughly 250 wolves on Prince of  
23 Wales Island, that's a lot of deer. Maybe I'll make  
24 another math mistake here, but the human harvest of  
25 deer on Prince of Wales Island, according to the data  
26 that's been presented, has peaked at about 4,000 deer.  
27 The harvest of deer by wolves would appear to be, if we  
28 use that swag estimate of 26 per, 6,500 deer. So the  
29 wolves are well ahead of the bipeds in harvesting deer.  
30

31 When this proposal came up, I thought,  
32 gee, this is kind of strange, 30 percent. Boy, that  
33 seems a little bit high. Now I'm actually wondering  
34 whether 30 percent would provide the management  
35 flexibility to reduce the wolf population if we saw the  
36 next year that instead of there being 231 wolves that  
37 there were 350 wolves or a very large number of wolves,  
38 which would clearly have a greater impact upon  
39 subsistence deer hunters' ability to get deer.  
40

41 So I guess I'm working around to a  
42 question. Since the Department has increasingly good  
43 relations with hunters and trappers on Prince of Wales,  
44 if I was in your shoes, I'd kind of want some  
45 flexibility there. The proposal, as written, is should  
46 not exceed, so it's not demanding of 30 percent harvest  
47 level.  
48

49 In terms of your management ability, it  
50

## Page 206

1 would seem that you would have greater ability to  
2 manage wolves if you had a flexibility there rather  
3 than be forced to hit only 20 percent of wolves. So  
4 would that management flexibility be useful to you in  
5 the Department's job of managing wolves and adjusting  
6 the predator/prey relationship to allow humans to  
7 continue to get the deer they need?  
8

9 MR. SCOTT: Through the Chair, Member  
10 Schroeder. There was a lot there and I appreciate  
11 that. So I did the math too, but I only used 25 just  
12 to make it simple so I didn't screw it up and I got the  
13 number too. It's really important to recognize that  
14 our estimate is all wolves. That doesn't necessarily  
15 mean that every single wolf is going out and eating  
16 that number of deer. I mean that's a generalized  
17 number of deer per wolf.  
18

19 And then as I mentioned earlier, one of  
20 the things that we are looking into and trying to  
21 understand better is really what compromises a wolf  
22 diet. Now the primary prey species is deer, especially  
23 for Unit 2 and in most other where deer occur at  
24 densities high enough that they can be very successful  
25 that's what they're going to focus on. They eat a lot  
26 of birds. They eat a ton of salmon.  
27

28 Black bear last year when we sampled a  
29 group of wolves that had been harvested in Unit 3 we  
30 found sea otter in them. So there's a lot of different  
31 dietary items. I would want to be very careful making  
32 the generalized statement that 231 wolves are going to  
33 go out and eat 26 deer a piece because that's a general  
34 statement and I don't know how accurate it would be.  
35

36 Getting to the other part of your  
37 statement, having the flexibility for any wildlife  
38 manager is important because folks are on the ground,  
39 they're interacting with the users, they have a good  
40 sense for what's happening and we want to be able to  
41 move around within those guidelines.  
42

43 I don't think anybody wants to declare  
44 war on wolves on Prince of Wales, so sticking with that  
45 30 percent, which is the accepted level of harvest that  
46 will -- you know, kind of has a wash impact, a neutral  
47 impact on a population, and there's other tools that we  
48 would have if we detected that, gosh, there's way too  
49 many at this point. Hypothetically we could approach  
50

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1 the Board of Game for an emergency regulation. We  
2 could work with the Feds. I think there's other  
3 opportunities for us to accomplish that flexibility if  
4 the situation required it.  
5

6 I think we also owe it to the wolves to  
7 approach it with the best scientific methodology and  
8 management strategy as well as social strategy, we owe  
9 it to them to manage that way. Again, I know I keep  
10 coming back to the 30 percent and that's acceptable in  
11 the literature and other research projects. At this  
12 point I wouldn't want to exceed that at this point  
13 knowing that there's other tools available to managers  
14 to address it if a need arises.  
15

16 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you.  
17

18 Cathy.  
19

20 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair. In  
21 your presentation you stated that the current  
22 population estimate techniques do not include the  
23 islands surrounding Prince of Wales that are still very  
24 much part of Unit 2. I'm wondering, in your experience  
25 with interacting with local knowledgeable people within  
26 Unit 2 if they've given you feedback on how important  
27 those islands may be or how much that data may be  
28 lacking that's impacting the population estimate.  
29

30 The second part of that question would  
31 be whether or not you know how much harvest is coming  
32 off of the islands as well.  
33

34 MR. SCOTT: Through the Chair. Member  
35 Needham. I would say that the folks that we've  
36 interacted with in Unit 2 believe that those other  
37 areas that we're not on the ground sampling play a very  
38 important role in the overall population and we  
39 recognize that. It's a place that -- there's a reason  
40 that the research began in North Central Prince of  
41 Wales, financially, logistically. We can move around  
42 essentially and access a lot of different areas. Gosh,  
43 what a great thing it was when Hydraburg Cooperative  
44 approached us. We were able to connect with TNC as  
45 well as the Citizen Science groups and we could expand  
46 that out.  
47

48 So we recognize that certainly wolves  
49 occur in areas that we're not operating hair-boards.  
50

## Page 208

1 While there's always some concern when you take a wolf  
2 density from a study area and in this case our study  
3 area is pretty large at this point in the overall Unit  
4 2 and extrapolate that out to the remainder of the  
5 unit, we go under the assumption that the densities are  
6 going to be somewhat similar across the ground.

7  
8 Some places that's not going to be  
9 true. Other places it's probably higher, you know. So  
10 that's an assumption that we make and we utilize the  
11 area that we can move around in, but certainly in  
12 conversations with many folks we're reminded often that  
13 there's a lot of wolves out on some of the outer  
14 islands.

15  
16 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you.

17 Follow up, Cathy.

18  
19 MS. NEEDHAM: The second part to it is  
20 how much harvest that you may -- are you aware of how  
21 much harvest is taken from those islands?

22  
23 MR. SCOTT: Through the Chair. Member  
24 Needham. Sorry about that. I try to remember  
25 multiple-part questions. Yeah, we know there's harvest  
26 for sure. I don't have those numbers off the top of my  
27 head. We have access to them, but it's not something  
28 -- you know, we don't report that type of harvest  
29 information publicly. We report harvest information on  
30 a Game Management Unit level. Sometimes down to the  
31 sub-unit.

32  
33 For co-operators, like the Forest  
34 Service and other folks, we can work at a little bit  
35 smaller scale, but we don't make that information  
36 available publicly. Frankly, the best source of  
37 information is to talk to the trappers in Unit 2.

38  
39 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Mr. Douville.

40  
41 MR. DOUVILLE: I don't have any more  
42 questions, but I do have a comment. I would encourage  
43 the Department to use TEK and apply that while you're  
44 setting the quota and not afterwards because there's  
45 really nothing to say. It's already been done. I think  
46 you need to include those knowledgeable people and you  
47 would get better cooperation and they would feel like  
48 they were a contributor and probably be more helpful in  
49  
50

## Page 210

1 because you've already set precedence according to your  
2 numbers in 2014.

3  
4 You've allowed 34 percent to be caught  
5 by trappers and hunters. That left you with your  
6 estimated 59 wolves which survived and ended up to 230  
7 today. So it seems like you have a baseline of 59  
8 wolves that will survive and two years later you end up  
9 with 230 wolves by your estimate.

10  
11 MR. SCOTT: Through the Chair. Member  
12 Howard. Thanks. You know, I hadn't thought of it or  
13 looked at it that way, so I appreciate that. Wolf  
14 numbers are dynamic as we all know. As you mentioned  
15 as well, they're going to move up and down with prey  
16 availability and we don't know much about survival,  
17 though we are -- you know, that's another part of some  
18 of the research that is occurring.

19  
20 Because we can collect genetic material  
21 from pups at dens now through scat samples, we're  
22 actually able to look through after we go through X  
23 however many years of harvest, one year, three years,  
24 five years, whatever it might be, we're collecting  
25 genetic samples from harvested wolves provided to us by  
26 the trappers, which is great, and we are starting to  
27 get a glimpse of what our survival looks like as well  
28 and that's something that I think would be very useful  
29 for everybody, but it's a tough kind of thing to look  
30 at.

31  
32 Thank you again for -- yeah, I  
33 appreciate looking at it like that.

34  
35 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Mr. Schroeder and then  
36 Patty.

37  
38 MR. SCHROEDER: This is more for the  
39 record. I note that what's been on the books has been  
40 a harvest guideline and not a mortality guideline and I  
41 do appreciate the real concern when the wolf numbers  
42 were extremely low or looked like they were extremely  
43 low of being sensitive to Endangered Species Act and  
44 all kinds of interests that are placed in Prince of  
45 Wales wolves elsewhere. In this room we're concerned  
46 about subsistence, not fighting battles with groups  
47 over Endangered Species Act things.

48  
49 Just to get that on the record.  
50

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1 other aspects.

2  
3 Having said that I am encouraging the  
4 troops to be more helpful in reporting in a timely  
5 fashion and try to stay within the number. I haven't  
6 seen anything negative, so maybe there's some hope that  
7 that will work a little bit better.

8  
9 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you. Did you  
10 have a comment?

11  
12 MR. SCOTT: Yeah. Thank you, Mr.  
13 Chairman. Through the Chair. Member Douville. I  
14 recognize the importance and the value of the  
15 relationships that we've had in the unit and with this  
16 Council, not only this species, and it is something  
17 that I will definitely continue to do as we move  
18 forward.

19  
20 This year it was kind of an interesting  
21 dynamic where we had 20 percent and that's what I could  
22 put on the table. I appreciate all the efforts of the  
23 trappers in the unit. So this Council is aware, we  
24 have had some conversations with the trappers in Unit 2  
25 and I feel like they've been very productive. As  
26 always, I learn something new every time. But I  
27 believe those relationships are doing pretty well.

28  
29 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you.

30  
31 Mr. Howard.

32  
33 MR. HOWARD: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
34 Listening to Mr. Schroeder I had to look at my math  
35 again. According to 2014, that says 89 estimated  
36 wolves, but you took -- here it shows a total of wolves  
37 taken during that time is 30. So if 89 and 30 were  
38 taken, that's 34 percent of the total estimated  
39 population for that year was taken. So now you kind of  
40 look at it as 59 wolves survived to this time to  
41 produce 231.

42  
43 In two years you went from your  
44 estimated 59 wolves after 30 were taken to now 230. If  
45 you look at the 30 percent of 230, that's 69 wolves.  
46 If you look at the recommended leaving 175 of those on  
47 the table, that's a take of 55 wolves. It's almost  
48 your 30 percent comes out better than any other idea if  
49 you're running numbers based on what you have here  
50

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1 Then just in my familiarity with game  
2 management over the years I don't recall that -- it was  
3 kind of a regular thing that is figured in for other  
4 species or in other areas where the wildlife biologist  
5 in the Department present the data that they have and  
6 then they say but really we think there were a lot of  
7 wounding losses for these brown bear or really the deer  
8 harvest should be 10 percent higher because a lot of  
9 people miss or they can't find their deer.

10  
11 I don't think that including this  
12 estimate for other mortality is kind of a normal thing  
13 that you do. If you could just respond to that mostly  
14 for the record here.

15  
16 MR. SCOTT: Through the Chair. Member  
17 Schroeder, thank you. It certainly is front and center  
18 here with the Unit 2 wolves. I think that is largely  
19 because at times, even if we looked at 20 percent of 89  
20 which we estimated in '14, we're dealing with a pretty  
21 small quota. Managing for a small quota has inherent  
22 disadvantages and it's very difficult especially when  
23 we have an extended sealing period requirement.

24  
25 We're very fortunate in the management  
26 world that Unit 2 wolves have only a two-week  
27 requirement. The rest of the state essentially is 30  
28 days. But we do do this with other species, bears in  
29 particular. Several years ago at this point we went  
30 through an exercise where we were trying to estimate  
31 harvest rates for black bear numbers when we had black  
32 bear concerns across the region and we used -- I  
33 believe it was 10 percent or, no, 25 percent of a  
34 wounding loss correction for some of those to estimate  
35 the number of bears that we should provide for harvest.

36  
37 This one gets a lot of attention I  
38 think because of the species that we're talking about,  
39 the location we're talking about and we're dealing with  
40 small numbers to manage for in the harvest, but it's  
41 not unprecedented necessarily to use it.

42  
43 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you.

44  
45 Patty.

46  
47 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Chairman  
48 Bangs. I have a series of questions if you'll indulge  
49 me. Thank you. I want to confirm something. So if a  
50

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1 harvester takes a wolf, do they report exact location  
2 of where they got the wolf?  
3  
4 MR. SCOTT: Through the Chair. Member  
5 Phillips. Exact is -- we don't get GPS coordinates,  
6 but we might get an island or a local name or something  
7 like that. So it's relatively exact.  
8  
9 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you. So we had a  
10 lot of information in our packets. I mean the  
11 analysis, the wolf study, the ADF&G history or  
12 documents. In one of them it showed that a large  
13 percentage of wolf harvest was in the road corridors on  
14 POW. Are the hair-boards in the road corridor or are  
15 they distributed road corridor and heavily timbered  
16 area or how does that work?  
17  
18 MR. SCOTT: Through the Chair. Member  
19 Phillips. They are along road corridors and that  
20 provides the access to a lot of the areas, but they do  
21 incorporate a variety of terrain, forest type,  
22 everything from muskegs to timber to other. We try to  
23 use a homogenous approach to that so we're not just  
24 sampling out of one type of area.  
25  
26 By and large, most of them are  
27 accessible by vehicle so we can at least get into the  
28 area. A lot of them require some hiking and things  
29 like that to them, so they're not set necessarily on  
30 the road, but we do use the roads to access the areas.  
31  
32 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you. So you said  
33 this year's harvest is based on last year's hair-boards  
34 and so this year's hair-boards are showing an  
35 increasing population. So that will mean more wolf  
36 harvest potential for 2018.  
37  
38 Is that what you're predicting?  
39  
40 MR. SCOTT: Through the Chair. Member  
41 Phillips. It's kind of like not painting myself into  
42 the corner, you know. I don't have a prediction what  
43 it's going to be, but it's potential. If we observe  
44 continued growth, then yeah. I mean the percentages  
45 are based on the most recent estimate. It may in fact  
46 provide for additional harvest in the coming year.  
47  
48 While the process takes a year from  
49 sample collection in the fall to DNA extraction and  
50

## Page 214

1 mountain goat kidding. Some moose work, you know,  
2 things like that, but those are the primary methods for  
3 us.  
4  
5 MS. PHILLIPS: So the study says  
6 adaptive management for timber harvest and I know  
7 there's been significant land transfers to State  
8 ownership and potential timber harvest in those areas.  
9 We're hearing to avoid this ESA potential how strongly  
10 will the Department state that in a potential State  
11 timber harvest? Thank you.  
12  
13 MR. SCOTT: Through the Chair. Member  
14 Phillips. That's an excellent question. We will go at  
15 it as rigorously as we would with any other kind of  
16 land management activity.  
17  
18 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you.  
19  
20 Mr. Hernandez.  
21  
22 MR. HERNANDEZ: This is also kind of  
23 along Cathy's questioning there. How about with the  
24 private corporation lands, what's your involvement in  
25 management on those lands.  
26  
27 MR. SCOTT: Through the Chair. Member  
28 Hernandez. Frankly, it's much more limited. At times  
29 we have been approached by various corporations and  
30 asked for wildlife-related information, but it's not as  
31 often as when a big timber contract might come up with  
32 the Forest Service.  
33  
34 I will say, however, just within the  
35 last year we've had a lot of conversations with  
36 Sealaska Corporation and that was great. Not only was  
37 it an opportunity to sit down and talk about various  
38 lands across the region, but it was an opportunity for  
39 all of us to kind of dig down into the history of land  
40 management as well as wildlife management in some of  
41 those places.  
42  
43 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Follow up, Don.  
44  
45 MR. HERNANDEZ: Yeah, just a comment.  
46 I mean just to point out to other folks there are  
47 several hundred thousand acres of private lands as well  
48 on Prince of Wales Island, a lot of which are selected  
49 from the most prime habitat that was available to  
50

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1 analysis through the winter and into the summer, it's  
2 important too to at least peripherally keep in mind  
3 that wolves are being harvested during the wintertime  
4 so this estimate doesn't include that. We don't  
5 subtract those wolves from the estimate.  
6  
7 We use the point estimate to be  
8 consistent over time, so we're losing some wolves. In  
9 addition to that we're gaining some wolves because  
10 we're going through another pupping season as well. So  
11 it's moving around all the time, the overall number of  
12 animals.  
13  
14 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
15 So are you doing DNA analysis on harvested wolves?  
16  
17 MR. SCOTT: Through the Chair. Member  
18 Phillips. Absolutely. And it's important to do that  
19 so we know which animals have been removed from the  
20 population.  
21  
22 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
23 And to address the elephant in the room, which is like  
24 land management, how does Fish and Game influence  
25 timber harvest on State lands?  
26  
27 MR. SCOTT: Through the Chair. Member  
28 Phillips. We have a series of agreements with the U.S.  
29 Forest Service and other land management agencies  
30 across the state. Our primary mode of influencing  
31 those things is to provide comments to timber sales or  
32 land management activities. There are standards and  
33 guidelines as well listed in the Tongass Land  
34 Management Plan as well as the Management Plan  
35 Amendment.  
36  
37 We also contributed to, myself and the  
38 Forest Supervisor as well as the Director of the Fish  
39 and Wildlife Programs for the Forest Service, the first  
40 day of the meeting discussed the wolf habitat  
41 management recommendations that we contributed to.  
42 Those are all avenues for us to ensure that wildlife is  
43 being managed and ensure that we are taking our mandate  
44 to conserve and provide for a variety of uses those  
45 wildlife resources over time.  
46  
47 Those are the primary avenues. To get  
48 down into the weeds sometimes we comment on specific  
49 den locations, we comment on buffering activities for  
50

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1 select from as well. So it's a significant factor as  
2 well. I would hope that maybe in the future these  
3 discussions you're having with the Native corporations  
4 could be more productive along those lines.  
5  
6 Thank you.  
7  
8 MR. SCOTT: Through the Chair. Member  
9 Hernandez. I couldn't agree more. I also think that  
10 it's an important -- it's a good opportunity to point  
11 out that these several huge tracts of private land  
12 through this proposal would still be managed under the  
13 State regulation. So private and State lands would be  
14 at the 20 percent harvest level.  
15  
16 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you.  
17  
18 Mr. Douville.  
19  
20 MR. DOUVILLE: A five-minute recess?  
21  
22 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Yeah, I just thought  
23 we could get through the State presentation and then I  
24 was going to.....  
25  
26 MR. DOUVILLE: When we're done with the  
27 State?  
28  
29 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Yeah. Right. Is  
30 there any other questions.  
31  
32 (No comments)  
33  
34 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Hearing none. Thank  
35 you, gentlemen. I think we'll take a 10-minute at  
36 ease.  
37  
38 (Off record)  
39  
40 (On record)  
41  
42 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Please take your  
43 seats. I'd like to come back to order here and go back  
44 to the proposal. Are there any Federal agency reports.  
45  
46 (No comments)  
47  
48 CHAIRMAN BANGS: We have some tribal  
49 documents that Ms. Perry is going to read into the  
50

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1 record.

2 MS. PERRY: Thank you, Chair. For the  
3 record, this is DeAnna Perry, Council Coordinator for  
4 the Southeast RAC. I wanted to check to see if Clinton  
5 Cook, Sr., tribal president of Craig Tribal Association  
6 has called in.

7 MR. COOK: Yes, I'm on the line.  
8 Sorry, I was trying to get off a ladder.

9 (Laughter)

10 MS. PERRY: Well, don't let us distract  
11 you. Would you like me to go ahead and read the  
12 resolutions into the record and then maybe you'll be  
13 off the ladder and can speak.

14 MR. COOK: Either way you want to. I'm  
15 off the ladder now.

16 MS. PERRY: Okay. Well, why don't I  
17 defer to you and go ahead and have your comments and  
18 I'll be happy to read the resolutions into the record  
19 once you're finished if you don't do so.

20 MR. COOK: If that's fine by the Chair,  
21 that's fine by me.

22 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Go ahead, Mr. Cook.

23 MR. COOK: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank  
24 you, Members of the Committee for having this  
25 discussion today about the Unit 2 wolf issues. I've  
26 been listening off and on throughout the morning, the  
27 testimonies of the Forest Service and Alaska Department  
28 of Fish and Game.

29 I like some of the comments from the  
30 Committee saying how could your numbers be so  
31 drastically off when we were allowed to harvest nine  
32 last year and that ended up the number being 58 or 59.  
33 Now we're at 283, 281, who knows. No numbers on the  
34 outer islands, which is a major coup as us rural people  
35 who do harvest deer and/or wolf do use those islands  
36 exclusively sometimes.

37 I'd like to put on the record in 2016  
38 the Forest Service released new information documenting

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1 pretty much the same resolution the other two tribes  
2 submitted. But Craig Tribe for sure. I can't speak  
3 for the other tribes, but I'd like Craig Tribe's  
4 resolution on the record.

5 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you. We'll do  
6 that right now.

7 MS. PERRY: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
8 DeAnna Perry, Council Coordinator. We received a  
9 resolution from the Craig Tribal Association titled: A  
10 resolution from the Craig Tribal Association, a  
11 Federally recognized tribe. A request to increase the  
12 wolf harvest level in Game Unit 2. CTA resolution 2017-  
13 4.

14 Whereas the Craig Tribal Association  
15 (CTA) is a duly constituted Indian tribe organized  
16 pursuant to the authority of Section 16 of the Act of  
17 Congress on June 18, 1934, 48 Stat. 984, as amended by  
18 the Acts of Congress June 15, 1934, 49 Stat. 378, and  
19 May 1st, 1936, 49 Stat. 1250; and

20 Whereas the Craig Tribal Association  
21 Tribal Council is the governing body of the Craig Tribe  
22 in accordance with the Constitution and bylaws  
23 representing the Association and all its undertakings  
24 for the well-being of the Tribe, exercising their  
25 powers and authority to make rules and regulations; and

26 Whereas in 2016 the U.S. Forest Service  
27 released new information documenting the wolf  
28 population is at an increasingly high level based on  
29 increasing population data showing higher density of  
30 wolves which was then extrapolated to the game unit;  
31 and

32 Whereas trail camera evidence collected  
33 by third parties documented new litters in the game  
34 unit. The presence of eight packs with pups presents a  
35 significant increase in documented recruitment from the  
36 paucity of dens and litters previously reported; and

37 Whereas the new information supports a  
38 proposed increase in wolf harvest in Game Unit 2 on  
39 Federal lands from 20 percent to 30 percent to allow  
40 for continued subsistence use of wildlife in view of an  
41 increasing population of wolves in the game unit; now,  
42 therefore, be it

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1 the wolf population is at an increasingly high level.  
2 These levels are due to mismanagement of not allowing  
3 the number of wolves harvested needed to make a stable  
4 balance in the ecosystem. Talking with local knowledge  
5 and traditional knowledge on the island they feel the  
6 numbers should be from 150 to 200 as a sustainable  
7 number.

8 I know Unit 2 wolf is a heated topic,  
9 but the wolf population is out of control. I have  
10 tribal members calling me expressing their concern that  
11 when they go hunting they hear more wolves howling at  
12 different times and then they've seen deer in units  
13 that they have hunted deer.

14 Personally, I would like to say I've  
15 been a member of the island my adult life and I've  
16 never had an interaction with wolves as I have the past  
17 few years. So to me that means the numbers are  
18 alarmingly high when man has an interaction with  
19 wolves.

20 I'd like to speak in favor of the  
21 Committee looking at the wolf harvest being 30 percent.  
22 Also finding a sustained number between 150 to 200. I  
23 thank the Committee for your time. I believe that the  
24 Forest Service needs to start having true  
25 government-to-government consultation on these issues  
26 because that's where the traditional knowledge lies and  
27 what the numbers could be.

28 Data, hair-boards, all this, all that.  
29 I've seen trail cams where a pack of eight wolves  
30 walked right by a hair-snagger, catcher majigi and  
31 never rubbed it. So that data to me is inconclusive on  
32 your numbers.

33 With those comments I thank you for  
34 your time in this important matter and I'm strongly  
35 supporting the 30 percent harvest level.

36 Thank you.

37 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr. Cook.  
38 Would you like the document that was presented to us by  
39 the tribe would you like it read into the record?

40 MR. COOK: Yes, I would. I don't know  
41 how you guys want to do it, but all three tribes have

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1 Resolved, the Craig Tribal Association,  
2 a Federally recognized tribe in Craig, Alaska, requests  
3 the Southeast Regional Advisory Council implement  
4 action to increase the wolf harvest for Game Unit 2 on  
5 Federal lands from 20 percent to 30 percent.

6 There is a certification. Approved,  
7 passed and adopted by a duly-constituted quorum of the  
8 Craig Tribal Association tribal council on this 30th  
9 day of October, 2017. Six voted yes, zero voted no,  
10 zero abstained, zero were absent, zero were excused.  
11 This was signed by Clinton E. Cook, Sr., Tribal  
12 President.

13 Yesterday when we read the resolutions  
14 into the record we read all three, so I'll go ahead and  
15 do that as well.

16 A second resolution was submitted by  
17 the Organized Village of Kasaan. This is Resolution  
18 OVK 17-10-002. A resolution of the Organized Village of  
19 Kasaan requesting the Southeast Regional Advisory  
20 Council increase the wolf harvest level in Game Unit 2  
21 on Federal lands from 20 percent to 30 percent.

22 Whereas the Organized Village of Kasaan  
23 is a Federally recognized tribe organized pursuant to  
24 the Indian Reorganization Act of June 18, 1934, 48  
25 Stat. 984 and May 1st, 1936, 49 Stat. 1250; and

26 Whereas the corporate charter of the  
27 Organized Village of Kasaan ratified October 15th, 1938  
28 states in its purpose and existence, "In order to  
29 further the economic development of the Indians  
30 residing in the neighborhood of Kasaan, Alaska by  
31 conferring upon the Organized Village of Kasaan  
32 corporate rights and powers and to enable this village  
33 and its members to undertake enterprises designed to  
34 secure for the members of a corporation and assure  
35 economic independence."; and

36 Whereas the Organized Village of  
37 Kasaan, hereinafter OVK, is governed by a council of  
38 elected representatives composed of a president and six  
39 members who acted in accordance with the powers granted  
40 to it by its constitution and bylaws, ratified on  
41 October 15, 1938; and

42 Whereas in 2016 the U.S. Forest Service

16 (Pages 216 to 219)



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1 released new information documenting the wolf  
2 population is at an increasingly high level based on  
3 increasing population data showing higher density of  
4 wolves which was then extrapolated to the game unit;  
5 and  
6  
7 Whereas trail camera evidence collected  
8 by third parties documented new litters in the game  
9 unit. The presence of eight packs with pups presents a  
10 significant increase in documented recruitment from the  
11 paucity of dens and litters previously reported; and  
12  
13 Whereas the new information supports a  
14 proposed increase in wolf harvest in Game Unit 2 on  
15 Federal lands from 20 percent to 30 percent to allow  
16 for continued subsistence use of wildlife in view of an  
17 increasing population of wolves in the game unit; now,  
18 therefore, be it  
19  
20 Resolved, by the council of the  
21 Organized Village of Kasaan requests the Southeast  
22 Regional Advisory Council implement action to increase  
23 the wolf harvest for Game Unit 2 on Federal lands from  
24 20 percent to 30 percent.  
25  
26 Certification. Approved, passed and  
27 adopted by a duly-constituted quorum of the OVK Tribal  
28 Council on this 30th day of October, 2017 by a  
29 telephone poll. Della Coburn voted no; Audrey  
30 Escoffon, yes; Glenn Hamar, no; Ronald Leighton, yes;  
31 Carrie Sykes voted yes. This resolution was signed by  
32 Frederick Olsen, Jr., president and attested by Carrie  
33 Sykes, Council secretary. That concludes resolution  
34 OVK 17-10-002.  
35  
36 The third resolution we received was  
37 from the Klawock Cooperative Association Tribe. It is  
38 Resolution No. 17-16. Title: A request to increase the  
39 wolf harvest level in Game Unit 2.  
40  
41 Whereas in 2016 the U.S. Forest Service  
42 released new information documenting the wolf  
43 population is at an increasingly high level based on  
44 increasing population data showing higher density of  
45 wolves which was then extrapolated to the game unit;  
46 and  
47  
48 Whereas trail camera evidence collected  
49 by third parties documented new litters in the game  
50

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1 problem that does not exist and he expressed concerns  
2 regarding new classes of citizens with special hunting  
3 rights being created. He also expressed concern about  
4 residency criteria and the ability of some Alaskans to  
5 harvest 20 halibut a day.  
6  
7 Five additional written public comments  
8 in opposition were received from Fairbanks residents  
9 Francis Mauer, Sharon Alden and Jim Kowalsky for  
10 Alaskans for Wildlife. Also Larry Edwards of Sitka and  
11 Dr. Robert Sikes, president of American Society of  
12 Mammalogists.  
13  
14 Viewpoints included the extension of  
15 season would likely lead to excessive harvest of an  
16 already depleted population of wolves. The enforcement  
17 of past quotas have failed or have been poorly managed  
18 resulting most recently in the season quota being  
19 exceeded by over two times. Conservation concerns,  
20 including the impact of illegal and legal overharvest,  
21 decrease in prey, the decrease in deer population  
22 expected because of past, current or planned logging.  
23 The lack of consideration of other important factors  
24 and deer hunter success besides predation. And more  
25 pressure on a wolf population already in trouble  
26 appears to be contrary to the basic concept of wildlife  
27 management.  
28  
29 That concludes the public comments  
30 received on Wildlife Proposal 18-04.  
31  
32 Mr. Chair.  
33  
34 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Ms. Perry.  
35 Okay, moving on to public testimony.  
36  
37 We have Mr. Winston Smith.  
38  
39 DR. SMITH: Good morning. Thank you  
40 for giving me the opportunity to speak this morning. I  
41 have put together a small PowerPoint presentation and  
42 hopefully I'll be able to control with this remote  
43 here.  
44  
45 This morning I'd like to talk a little  
46 bit about proposed action from the perspective of would  
47 it really achieve the desired outcome.  
48  
49 To remind Mr. Chairman and Council  
50

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1 unit. The presence of eight packs with pups presents a  
2 significant increase in documented recruitment from the  
3 paucity of dens and litters previously reported; and  
4  
5 Whereas the new information supports a  
6 proposed increase in wolf harvest in Game Unit 2 on  
7 Federal lands from 20 percent to 30 percent to allow  
8 for continued subsistence use of wildlife in view of an  
9 increasing population of wolves in the game unit; now,  
10 therefore, it is  
11  
12 Resolved, the Klawock Cooperative  
13 Association Tribal Council hereby requests the  
14 Southeast Regional Advisory Council implement action to  
15 increase the wolf harvest for Game Unit 2 on Federal  
16 lands from 20 percent to 30 percent.  
17  
18 Be it further resolved that a majority  
19 of the nine KCA Council members whose signatures appear  
20 next to their name will constitute the approval of this  
21 resolution. This resolution was signed by Patricia  
22 Rowan, vice-president; A. Webster Demmert, III; James  
23 Williams; Donald Nickerson, Jr.; Eva Rowan. That  
24 concludes Resolution 17-16.  
25  
26 Chair, that concludes the Native,  
27 tribal, village and other agency comments that were  
28 received.  
29  
30 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Ms. Perry.  
31 Were there any comments from other Regional Councils?  
32  
33 MS. PERRY: No, Mr. Chair.  
34  
35 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Or Fish and Game  
36 Advisory Committees or Subsistence Resource  
37 Commissions?  
38  
39 MS. PERRY: No, Mr. Chair, not on this  
40 proposal.  
41  
42 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Was there any written  
43 public comments?  
44  
45 MS. PERRY: Yes, Mr. Chair. We  
46 received six written comments on Proposal 18-04. One  
47 was a general public comment from Curtis Donald Thomas  
48 of Ketchikan addressing all Southeast proposals. Key  
49 viewpoints were that attempts were being made to fix a  
50

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1 Members, I am currently a principal research scientist  
2 with the Institute of Arctic Biology. I was a  
3 principal research scientist with the USDA Forest  
4 Service Pacific North Research Station. I'm now  
5 retired. I have more than four years of experience as a  
6 researcher and involved in wildlife management.  
7  
8 My expertise includes deer and in fact  
9 my doctoral dissertation was on deer. I've been  
10 involved in resolving conflicts among stakeholders and  
11 sensitive wildlife management issues, specifically as  
12 it relates to deer and endangered species.  
13  
14 I'm currently involved also in helping  
15 the State of Washington and the State of Oregon with  
16 similar kind of issues. So I think an important point  
17 to consider is not so much whether the desired outcome  
18 of this proposal is realistic or is a reasonable  
19 outcome to hope for, but to ask the question as to  
20 whether the proposed action will actually achieve the  
21 desired outcome.  
22  
23 As I understand it, the increased quota  
24 for wolves in Unit 2 the goals and expectations  
25 according to my understanding of having read the  
26 proposal or to increase access to valuable resource for  
27 both trappers and hunters.  
28  
29 Secondary, although maybe not directly  
30 stated expectation, is that through maintaining wolf  
31 populations at lower levels it's going to reduce deer  
32 mortality. One of the goals of that is to also have an  
33 increase in deer populations with the hope that it  
34 would increase deer hunting success.  
35  
36 So let's look at each one of these with  
37 respect to some of the assumptions and misconceptions  
38 that might be involved with this desired outcome given  
39 an increase in the wolf quota. First of all,  
40 increasing annual wolf harvest does not increase the  
41 risk of unsustainable harvest.  
42  
43 Well, I'm not going to dwell on that  
44 because we've heard a lot of excellent reporting and  
45 discussion by the Department of Fish and Game this  
46 morning on wolf populations, but I think we've seen  
47 that over the last few years that when harvest has been  
48 maintained at certain high levels that wolf populations  
49 do respond to that and that we've seen a decline in  
50

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1 wolf populations as a result of increased harvest.  
2  
3 I think it would not be too  
4 presumptuous to expect that one of the goals of this  
5 proposal is to have not only increased access to a  
6 valuable resource but to have a sustainable harvest  
7 over the period. So that's an important consideration.  
8  
9 If we think about this, wolf  
10 populations remain stable. It assumes that wolf  
11 populations are always able to consistently respond  
12 immediately to increased harvest. In some cases maybe  
13 harvest beyond what might be recommended giving  
14 existing or current wolf population levels.  
15  
16 We've seen that that's not always the  
17 case. That's not been supported by both work that's  
18 been done by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game as  
19 well as research that's in the literature and some of  
20 the best available science that is available.  
21  
22 The other important point about the  
23 ability of wolves to respond to increased harvest is  
24 the fact that sometimes we consider only the legal  
25 harvest mortality. It assumes that by doing that we  
26 only -- we're assuming that the natural mortality and  
27 illegal harvest is negligible. We heard reporting this  
28 morning that in some cases illegal harvest or unknown  
29 mortality in wolves can be pretty high.  
30  
31 I want to add to that new information  
32 that just came out in a publication last month in the  
33 Journal of Mammalogy, which is an internationally  
34 recognized journal that focuses on mammal ecology as  
35 well and it focused on the question of estimating wolf  
36 mortality.  
37  
38 One of the important points about this  
39 publication is that it has been determined that State  
40 publications or State estimates or other agency  
41 estimates of wolf mortality can underestimate illegal  
42 mortality by as much as 44 percent. That's quite high.  
43  
44 So given the fact that often we don't  
45 really have a good handle on illegal or other mortality  
46 might be and given that this recent publication has  
47 documented from a study that's done primarily in Canada  
48 can be as high as 44 percent.  
49  
50

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1 If in planning harvest quota we're not  
2 able to have a good handle on what that illegal harvest  
3 is, it could add to the amount of harvest each year  
4 that could then result in wolf population decline  
5 beyond what we might expect from the illegal harvest  
6 quota that we have in place and I think that's a really  
7 important consideration.  
8  
9 This assumption requires that assuring  
10 the quota will not be exceeded assumes accurate and  
11 timely total harvest. Although the testimony this  
12 morning or the reporting this morning, the discussion  
13 this morning that indicated that this hasn't happened  
14 very often, last year it did happen where because of  
15 reporting that more wolves were harvested than the  
16 stated legal -- there was a much higher legal harvest  
17 than the stated quota.  
18  
19 So given all that I think it's really  
20 important to understand the significance of quota rates  
21 and how they may influence wolf mortality and,  
22 therefore, call into question whether sustainable wolf  
23 harvest are possible over the longer term.  
24  
25 Okay. Let's talk about assumptions and  
26 misconceptions with respect to deer populations.  
27 Increasing annual wolf harvest increases local deer  
28 population. It's easy to understand that wolves can  
29 take large numbers of deer and especially locally. And  
30 it's easy to understand and to think about this, well,  
31 if wolves are eating deer, then if we have fewer  
32 wolves, then we would have more deer.  
33  
34 This is much more complex than a simple  
35 explanation or a simple reasoning might come to be able  
36 to resolve. In fact, we actually heard a comment  
37 earlier this morning by one of the members about how  
38 these things are all tied together, the ecosystem and  
39 the fact that it's a lot more complex.  
40  
41 So I think this is a point that I want  
42 to emphasize this morning. Recent deer declines,  
43 that's not to say that some of these reports are not  
44 the best local knowledge that may be available, but the  
45 evidence that we heard both yesterday and from what has  
46 been reported by the State indicates that deer  
47 populations are probably at their highest levels  
48 because of mild winters. So there's no real evidence  
49 that deer populations actually have declined.  
50

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1 This information is fairly credible  
2 because of the improved survey data using similar  
3 techniques with deer that they're using with wolves,  
4 using DNA sequencing and estimating populations that  
5 way.  
6  
7 The other point I'd like to make about  
8 this is the idea that wolves reduce deer density  
9 assumes that deer are limited by predation and I made  
10 the point yesterday when I made comments about black  
11 bears that although wolves do have an influence on  
12 local deer populations through predation, the vast  
13 amount of science and knowledge that we have about deer  
14 indicate that wolves do not limit deer populations.  
15  
16 I want to illustrate this if I might  
17 with -- and I apologize if I'm oversimplifying what is  
18 actually a fairly complex issue. What I have here in  
19 the slide I actually have two diagrams and these two  
20 diagrams are like water reservoirs and I want to use  
21 the influx of water and the outflow of water and these  
22 reservoirs in these two containers to illustrate my  
23 point.  
24  
25 If you would bear with me and recognize  
26 that each of these containers -- actually the size of  
27 the container is the habitat for deer and that, what  
28 would otherwise be water inside these containers, is  
29 actually a deer population. As you go to the bottom of  
30 the container, the age of the deer get older. That is  
31 all the new water that is coming into this container  
32 all the reproduction happens early -- near the top of  
33 this container early in the year and that deer get  
34 older as you go lower in the container.  
35  
36 What you'll see here, what I've  
37 illustrated, is there's a shut-off valve here such that  
38 when the population is near carrying capacity where  
39 it's no longer -- a deer cannot be sustained beyond  
40 this population size because of the habitat and the  
41 carrying capacity, that the pressure from the deer  
42 population prevents deer reproduction. There's not  
43 much inflow.  
44  
45 So imagine a water valve where the  
46 container is full, that valve is shut. There's no more  
47 new water coming in because that valve is shut because  
48 the container is already full. It's the same kind of  
49 idea with deer populations. When they're at carrying  
50

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1 capacity, you don't get much new deer reproduction.  
2  
3 Now, at the same time you have  
4 predation where you're losing -- at the bottom of this  
5 container you're losing deer through predation and for  
6 the most part deer have an impact on the older segment  
7 of the population. That's not to say they don't take  
8 fawns, but for the most part it's older deer that are  
9 actually impacted by wolf predation.  
10  
11 So the point here being is that in both  
12 of these containers you actually have these processes  
13 going on and as wolves take deer or as water leaves  
14 this container and the levels go down, it opens up the  
15 valve and you have deer reproduction and you have  
16 inflow of water, whichever way you want to think about  
17 this, such that the deer population responds to the  
18 lower levels as a result of predation, they respond  
19 proportionately.  
20  
21 We call this density dependent response  
22 in the wildlife management and wildlife research  
23 literature. So, yes, wolves can have an influence on  
24 the number of deer locally and in a given year, given  
25 season, but deer populations respond and that response  
26 is not limited by the wolves, it's limited by the  
27 habitat.  
28  
29 So, given that and looking at this  
30 example here, you have more deer in a population not by  
31 reducing predation. You have more deer by having more  
32 habitat. That's the point of showing these two  
33 different containers and showing that you have the same  
34 processes going on, but the total deer population is  
35 not limited by the process. It's limited by the size  
36 of the container. It's limited by the habitat that's  
37 available. So that's the point I want to make with  
38 this slide.  
39  
40 The other point that I think is  
41 important to understand that maybe many of us who don't  
42 have experience with population dynamics and deer or  
43 other wildlife populations is that mortality is not  
44 always additive. We talk about predation from bears,  
45 we talk about predation from wolves, we talk about  
46 winter mortality.  
47  
48 The other point to understand is that  
49 some of that is what we call compensatory. That is to  
50

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1 say if more deer are taken through predation by bears  
2 or wolves or even by hunters, what usually happens is  
3 that the overwinter mortality from winter is actually  
4 less because the population density or the population  
5 size is lowered by the predation or by the hunting.  
6 Therefore, for that given year everything else equal,  
7 the overwinter mortality is less.

8 So there are processes that are going  
9 on here that are much more complex and much more  
10 complicated than one can simply reason by saying wolves  
11 eat deer, therefore less wolves, fewer deer. That's  
12 the essence, that's the point of this presentation.

13 The last point is that -- and this was  
14 made earlier this morning -- in nature everything is  
15 connected. Everything is connected. I agree that  
16 humans are a part of the ecosystem just like other  
17 organisms are. My point here is that deer and wolves  
18 are part of a community and in that community there are  
19 other members, there are other predators. There are  
20 bears on certain islands in Southeast Alaska, there are  
21 other deer, elk.

22 All of these species and the roles that  
23 they play in the community affect each other. So it's  
24 really important to understand that. They affect the  
25 trees and shrubs, they affect the scavengers, the birds  
26 and the mammals. The changes in one species in that  
27 community can have a profound impact on other members  
28 of that community. For example we learned this morning  
29 wolf prey on black bears.

30 I brought to your attention yesterday  
31 that black bears target fawn mortality. You change  
32 wolf population densities, you may influence black bear  
33 populations, thereby influencing bear targeting fawn  
34 mortality. So there are these kinds of interactions  
35 that are going on that makes it very difficult to  
36 understand how one single response will yield a single  
37 outcome. So that's really important I think to  
38 understand.

39 So black bears impact fawn survival.  
40 We learned this from Sophie Gilbert in her research  
41 with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. So the  
42 question is will reducing wolf populations increase  
43 fawn predation by bears and, if so, what effect will  
44 that have on deer populations. So it's not a very  
45

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1 simple, direct response that you can expect or a simple  
2 direct outcome.

3 So deer populations depend on fawn  
4 survival, so the effects of bears on deer are different  
5 perhaps than the effect of wolves on deer. All these  
6 factors are really important in trying to understand  
7 the dynamics of predators on deer populations, but the  
8 most important underlying point I want to make is that  
9 deer populations are primarily influenced by habitat  
10 and not by predation.

11 Okay. Summary and conclusions. If the  
12 goal is sustainable wolf harvest, the science suggests  
13 that total harvest rates less than or equal to 20  
14 percent are lower when there are less than 200 wolves.

15 Secondly, include both illegal and  
16 legal harvests when understanding what mortality wolf  
17 populations are experiencing in a given year. Reduce  
18 reporting intervals to ensure legal harvest does not  
19 exceed quota. I think it's possible to increase the  
20 quota if we can have real time reporting of mortality.  
21 To me it would be a win-win if you could maintain wolf  
22 populations at a higher level, whatever that level  
23 might be sustained.

24 This is a percentage. Twenty percent  
25 of 200 wolves is more than 30 percent of 100 wolves.  
26 We had an estimated population last year or actually a  
27 couple years ago of 100. Even if you increase the rate  
28 of harvest to 30 percent, you're only talking about 30  
29 wolves as a quota.

30 Wouldn't it be better for everybody,  
31 wolves included, in terms of sustainable wolf  
32 populations and reducing conservation concerns if you  
33 had a population whereby you could consistently get the  
34 quotas that you want without impacting the wolf  
35 populations in terms of their numbers from year to  
36 year. So that's what I'm suggesting as a  
37 consideration.

38 If the goal is to sustain deer  
39 populations, science suggests that you should focus on  
40 maintaining and restoring habitat. Finally, I think  
41 it's probably a good idea to maintain historical wolf  
42 population levels. That is to say wolf population  
43 levels that won't in any way raise conservation issues,  
44

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1 but yet allow populations of wolves that would allow a  
2 sustainable harvest of wolves by hunters and trappers.

3 Thank you for your time.

4 Those are my comments.

5 I welcome all questions.

6 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr. Smith.  
7 Are there any questions from the Council.

8 Mr. Hernandez.

9 MR. HERNANDEZ: I'm assuming that  
10 you've done a lot of research in the past on Prince of  
11 Wales or are familiar with research on the carrying  
12 capacity portion of your presentation.

13 DR. SMITH: I do. I've done some  
14 research on Prince of Wales related to deer. In fact,  
15 I was involved in developing the technique that's used  
16 now by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game to  
17 estimate deer population size using genetic techniques.  
18 Now my work with respect to deer and carrying capacity,  
19 that not only includes my work with the Forest Service,  
20 but also includes work in other areas as well, so yes.

21 MR. HERNANDEZ: Can you give us any  
22 general sense from your experience on how close we are  
23 in areas on Prince of Wales Island to this carrying  
24 capacity for deer populations?

25 DR. SMITH: I think the State gave a  
26 report yesterday. Since I'm not actively involved in  
27 research or studies right now, it's difficult for me to  
28 give you a response as to what the population of deer  
29 is on Prince of Wales right now relative to the  
30 carrying capacity.

31 Based on what I saw yesterday in the  
32 report and what I understand, deer populations have  
33 been increasing over the last few years and have been  
34 because of the mild winters. Whether they're at or  
35 approaching carrying capacity that could only be  
36 determined from doing intense studies and coming up  
37 with population estimates at this point in time, over  
38 the time that we're talking about now.

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1 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you.

2 Mr. Howard.

3 MR. HOWARD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My  
4 question is one of many questions.

5 DR. SMITH: Okay.

6 MR. HOWARD: The first one is what  
7 organization do you represent?

8 DR. SMITH: I don't represent an  
9 organization. I am a scientist with the University of  
10 Alaska Fairbanks. My comments here do not represent  
11 necessarily the opinion of the University of Alaska  
12 Fairbanks. I am a scientist associated, affiliated  
13 with that university. So what I'm doing this morning  
14 is I'm offering my comments based on my professional  
15 experience as a professional in the field. I'm a  
16 wildlife scientist.

17 MR. HOWARD: Okay. A follow up to that  
18 then. What is your personal interest in preserving the  
19 wolves. I think the Fish and Game has demonstrated  
20 they're doing a really good job and I think we're part  
21 way meeting each other halfway. So if you're not  
22 representing an organization, what is your personal  
23 interest in these wolves?

24 DR. SMITH: My personal interest in  
25 wolves and deer is that I'm a hunter and trapper. I've  
26 hunted and trapped for 50 years. I'm also interested  
27 personally in having these resources be available and  
28 used by the community in a sustainable fashion. So I'm  
29 here this morning to offer my comments because of my  
30 experience and my knowledge and my background that  
31 might help achieve that outcome.

32 MR. HOWARD: If I may ask, where is  
33 your current residence?

34 DR. SMITH: 10915 Glacier Highway,  
35 Juneau, Alaska. I'm across from Auke Lake.

36 MR. HOWARD: Okay. That isn't on  
37 Prince of Wales. We have three organizations within  
38 the area. Alaska statute says resource management  
39 should be done with the local area to include the  
40

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1 village, the State and other organizations that the  
2 resource is closest to. So I'm wondering -- it doesn't  
3 say anything about someone who isn't in the immediate  
4 area. So having said that, that is why I'm asking the  
5 question.  
6  
7 Mr. Chair. Also you mentioned that  
8 deer, you put them in a container. They have certain  
9 resources they rely on to maintain life.  
10  
11 DR. SMITH: That's right.  
12  
13 MR. HOWARD: What you didn't do is  
14 throw 230 wolves into that same container. Now they're  
15 definitely going to have an impact. I see this at  
16 home. The bear population has a direct correlation  
17 with the deer population on Admiralty Island. One year  
18 you'll see there isn't much deer. A sow will have one  
19 cub. When there's deer all over the place, she'll have  
20 two.  
21  
22 I believe, if my science is correct,  
23 it's been a couple years since I've taken science  
24 class, but the natural -- nature's way of telling you  
25 everything is fine is possibly a wolf will have two  
26 cubs when there's no deer or anything for them to feed  
27 on. Now when there's a lot of deer on the island, the  
28 wolf will adjust by having four pups or possibly six.  
29  
30 So maybe that's the explanation of  
31 going from 59 deer that I looked at earlier to 230,  
32 that the deer population could justify the wolves  
33 naturally having more pups. But that's also going to  
34 have the flip side. Now that there's more pups and  
35 wolves on the island, there's going to be less deer.  
36 That's just basic fundamental science I think I learned  
37 in ninth grade.  
38  
39 Your science is one part of a big  
40 puzzle. I like the dialogue that happened between the  
41 Fish and Game when they were sitting here. They're  
42 trying to find common ground, not just say no. The  
43 answer no has gotten us to where we are now, to where  
44 there was no dialogue to where it feels like the tribes  
45 aren't being heard. So they come to a Federal board to  
46 be heard and that's why I believe they're here because  
47 maybe they weren't being heard. They are now, I see  
48 it.  
49  
50

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1 recommendation.  
2  
3 I just want to say that after this  
4 proposal I'm going to ask for public and tribal  
5 comments on non-agenda items and there might be some  
6 that are online or in the house. I meant to do it this  
7 morning but we were kind of in the middle of stuff, so  
8 I'd like to do that as soon as we're done with this  
9 proposal and then we'll move on with the rest of the  
10 proposals.  
11  
12 So what's the wish of the Council on  
13 WP18-04.  
14  
15 Mr. Hernandez.  
16  
17 MR. HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Mr.  
18 Chairman. I'll move to adopt Wildlife Proposal 18-04.  
19  
20 MR. DOUVILLE: Second.  
21  
22 CHAIRMAN BANGS: It's been moved by  
23 Member Hernandez and seconded by Mr. Douville.  
24  
25 Discussion.  
26  
27 Ms. Needham.  
28  
29 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As  
30 we begin our deliberations on this proposal I wanted to  
31 bring back to the Council some of our previous words  
32 that have been expressed on this in written testimony.  
33 Back in our fall meeting in 2014 we were in wildlife  
34 proposals for the Board of Game and this Council met  
35 with Fish and Game staff members in a workgroup  
36 situation to talk about reducing the 30 percent to 20  
37 percent at that time. We ended up making a  
38 recommendation on that Board of Game proposal which we  
39 provided testimony at the Board of Game meeting in  
40 January of 2015.  
41  
42 So I wanted to put that information  
43 before us again and put it on the record. In a letter  
44 to the Alaska Board of Game to Mr. Ted Spraker dated  
45 December 1st, 2014, I'm going to paraphrase the letter  
46 because we actually commented on a number of proposals.  
47  
48 In that letter the Southeast Regional  
49 Advisory Council comments on the Board of Game proposal  
50

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1 I guess that's all I have.  
2  
3 Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
4  
5 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr. Howard.  
6  
7 Are there any more questions for Mr.  
8 Smith.  
9  
10 (No comments)  
11  
12 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you for your  
13 presentation.  
14  
15 DR. SMITH: You bet. Thank you.  
16  
17 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Is there any other  
18 public testimony in the room.  
19  
20 (No comments)  
21  
22 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Is there any other  
23 public testimony from anyone that's listening in on the  
24 telephone.  
25  
26 (No comments)  
27  
28 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Hearing none. We're  
29 at the point where we could go into the Council's  
30 wishes on what we want to do with the proposal, but  
31 we're getting close to lunch time and I think  
32 deliberations are going to take a considerable amount  
33 of time. So if the Council would like we could break  
34 for lunch now. Does that sound like a good idea? It's  
35 10 to noon. How about if we get back here at 1:15.  
36 Does that work for everybody? 1:15.  
37  
38 Okay, we'll recess until 1:15 this  
39 afternoon.  
40  
41 (Off record)  
42  
43 (On record)  
44  
45 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Please take your  
46 seats. We're on Proposal WP18-04, increase harvest  
47 quota for wolves in Unit 2.  
48  
49 We're down to the Council  
50

## Page 235

1 No. 14, which was reduce the harvest level of wolves in  
2 Unit 2 from 30 percent to 20 percent of the previous  
3 fall population. The Southeast Regional Advisory  
4 Council's position is to support the proposal. The  
5 rationale for supporting that proposal was that Unit 2  
6 wolf population is at an appropriate level. Twenty  
7 percent provides sufficient management flexibility and  
8 control at that time. However, this can be changed  
9 later if needed. Our third point of rationale was this  
10 action addresses current threatened and endangered  
11 species listing concerns.  
12  
13 So I just wanted to remind the Council  
14 that we spent a lot of time on this subject back when  
15 the Board of Game reduced that level of harvest from 30  
16 percent to the 20 percent and we did so in that  
17 official capacity in our comments to the Board of Game.  
18  
19 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Cathy.  
20  
21 Mr. Hernandez.  
22  
23 MR. HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
24 I think it's kind of also important to point out that a  
25 lot of people have a misconception and I think I kind  
26 of came into the meeting with that misconception myself  
27 and it was reflected in the resolutions which were  
28 presented to us that we are not increasing the quota  
29 from 20 to 30 percent because as of right now Federal  
30 regulations has no quota in the regulation.  
31  
32 So we are proposing to set a quota at  
33 30 percent. It's a subtle difference, but we're not  
34 increasing the quota. Right now all we have is a --  
35 from what I understand from testimony from the Staff is  
36 we have a directive from the Board to their Federal  
37 managers that they will abide by the State regulation,  
38 which is 20 percent of the population as a quota.  
39  
40 Like I say, we would not be increasing  
41 our quota, we'd be setting a quota and that will  
42 essentially change possibly what the Board's directive  
43 would be to their Federal managers.  
44  
45 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Don.  
46  
47 Steve.  
48  
49 MR. REIFENSTUHL: I agree with that and  
50

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1 I also think what I said earlier. If the Department of  
2 Fish and Game sees a time where the population could  
3 sustain 30 percent, then that Federal regulation as it  
4 stands would allow the Federal managers to go to 30  
5 percent because it doesn't dictate one or the other as  
6 you were saying.

7  
8 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Steve.

9  
10 Mr. Douville.

11  
12 MR. DOUVILLE: I don't know if you all  
13 remember where this 20 percent came from, but I'll give  
14 you a little brief. We had a couple meetings in Craig  
15 with the various stakeholders if you will, trappers,  
16 hunters and interested people. We're being faced with  
17 this ESA and they're saying the number is way low. We  
18 didn't really believe that, but to err on the side of  
19 the resource we voluntarily suggested that 20 percent.

20  
21 But we did that for that season. We  
22 were only agreeing for that season. This turned into a  
23 Board of Game proposal, which is wrote in stone. That  
24 was not the intent of our meetings and that's clear.

25  
26 I've talked to other people and we all  
27 walked away thinking that we'll voluntary take less for  
28 the season and then we'll see how things go after that.

29  
30 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mike.  
31 Other discussion.

32  
33 (No comments)

34  
35 CHAIRMAN BANGS: The State said that  
36 they would be available if we have any questions, that  
37 Mr. Scott would come up.

38  
39 Patty.

40  
41 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Chairman  
42 Bangs. May I ask what the motion is.

43  
44 CHAIRMAN BANGS: There is no motion. I  
45 mean the motion is to accept the proposal, the one  
46 we've been working on, WP19-04. That was the motion and  
47 it was seconded and we're just in discussion.

48  
49 Mr. Howard.  
50

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1 The rural designation has given us a  
2 certain right to maintain a standard of living without  
3 having to stand here with my hand out to the State of  
4 Alaska and say I need more money. What it does is I  
5 need an ability to take care of my family and this is  
6 how it's done. I can go and hunt and I don't have to  
7 stand here with my hand out to the State of Alaska and  
8 saying I need more money.

9  
10 We've built a way of living for  
11 ourselves to adjust like everything else. This is  
12 their way of asking. The Department's numbers support  
13 the 30 percent. We're Federal. They're State. They  
14 tend to agree and they're meeting them halfway, but I  
15 think in order to make sure they meet them halfway that  
16 we support them.

17  
18 With all the background noise out of  
19 the way, everyone coming in and giving their opinion,  
20 the only opinion that should matter are the people that  
21 live there. Otherwise it's almost like -- I'll use the  
22 example the bridge to nowhere. That wasn't killed by  
23 people in Alaska. That was killed by someone from  
24 Arkansas, someone from Missouri. Do we really want to  
25 send that message that it's okay for someone to have an  
26 opinion about our backyards and our way of life that  
27 we're used to by saying no to this?

28  
29 One time I was thinking my grandfather  
30 probably was taking care of his family for years on a  
31 river, has always done this every year with no problem,  
32 and one day someone came in and said you can't do it  
33 anymore. I think their voice should be heard whether  
34 they're here or not as concern. We've tried for years.

35  
36 The Department has back to 1980  
37 information that supports that 30 percent isn't going  
38 to hurt the population. You went down to 59. Nature  
39 has a way of healing itself. You can go down to 59  
40 wolves and they'll come back to 320.

41  
42 That's what the numbers say.

43  
44 The thing I didn't appreciate hearing  
45 today is the fact that there may be litigation over  
46 this. That seems to be the common way to address this.  
47 Instead of coming to sit and talk at the table with us,  
48 they'll sit in the background and wait and if they  
49  
50

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1 MR. HOWARD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.  
2 I wonder if Mr. Cook is online still, Mr. Chair. I had  
3 a question for him.

4  
5 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Mr. Cook, are you  
6 online?

7  
8 (No response)

9  
10 CHAIRMAN BANGS: I guess he's not  
11 online.

12  
13 MR. HOWARD: Mr. Chairman, if I may,  
14 we're kind of in a unique spot, I believe. We  
15 represent the Federal side and the State doesn't always  
16 recognize the subsistence on the same level as we're  
17 charged to, if that makes any sense. So you have three  
18 Federally recognized tribes, which the intent of the  
19 Federally recognized tribes is to -- they're recognized  
20 as their own government. The State doesn't recognize  
21 them as their own government yet.

22  
23 Being that we're an arm of the Federal  
24 agency and we're here to recognize subsistence users,  
25 what I'm getting to is the State in a way decided that  
26 the rural designation is based on population and the  
27 economy of the community. It's been mentioned in  
28 several reports that the economy is a part of the  
29 State's equation. I'm looking at it from a village  
30 point of view and the economy and the fact that the  
31 Permanent Fund was cut in half.

32  
33 There's two things here you can look  
34 at. By allowing more wolves to be trapped, that allows  
35 the trappers to make more money, which helps them make  
36 up for the difference of the lost revenue that many  
37 people live on through the Permanent Fund. Some people  
38 could sit here and say I make so much money that the  
39 PFD is play money. Some of these people the Permanent  
40 Fund has become a part of how they take care of their  
41 family and sustain their family.

42  
43 I think to look at this we have to --  
44 you almost want to -- it doesn't seem fair, but there's  
45 a rural designation for a reason. The gentleman here,  
46 the reason I asked him where he was from, where his  
47 physical location is, is because when you don't get the  
48 rural designation you no longer have a say on what  
49 happens in someone else's community.  
50

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1 don't have their way, the next step is court. They  
2 should be here talking to us and seeing how this  
3 process works and how we got to where we are now  
4 instead of sitting in the background threatening  
5 litigation.

6  
7 I don't think that should even be a  
8 part of the process. I don't see anywhere in the  
9 paperwork where it says if you don't do what we want,  
10 we'll sue you. I don't see that here, so we should  
11 just kind of ignore that comment along with everything  
12 else that isn't a rural designation.

13  
14 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

15  
16 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr. Howard.  
17 Was it Patty or Mr. Douville that raised their hands  
18 before Mr. Howard. I know Harvey is next after that.

19  
20 Harvey.

21  
22 MR. KITKA: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
23 Maybe I want a clarification on this. I looked at the  
24 proposal and it shows a dash between the 20 and 30.  
25 Does that mean it's kind of on a sliding scale with a  
26 maximum of 30 percent or is it a complete shift from 20  
27 to 30?

28  
29 MR. SUMINSKI: Through the Chair. Mr.  
30 Kitka. Terry Suminski with the Forest Service. The  
31 proposal is -- the effect would actually be to  
32 establish up to 30 percent quota in Federal regulation.  
33 Like Mr. Hernandez pointed out earlier, the 20 percent  
34 comes from State regulation. It's not in Federal  
35 regulation. So the effect of this proposal would be  
36 that we would establish a 30 percent quota. Up to 30  
37 percent quota.

38  
39 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Follow up.

40  
41 MR. KITKA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Does  
42 that mean we could amend this proposal and make it kind  
43 of a sliding scale from 20 to 30 so that it allows for  
44 years when it starts to shift they can change it?

45  
46 MR. SUMINSKI: Through the Chair. Mr.  
47 Kitka. Similar to Ms. Phillips' question. Right now  
48 if the proposal was adopted up to 30 percent, you could  
49 go from 0 to 30 percent, which would include the 20-30.  
50

21 (Pages 236 to 239)

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1 It's actually more flexible if you say up to 30 rather  
2 than between 20 and 30.  
3  
4 Thank you.  
5  
6 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Cathy and then Robert.  
7  
8 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
9 Right now I'm inclined to support this proposal and I'm  
10 going to attempt to include my justification on that  
11 following our four points that we need to address to  
12 establish our record.  
13  
14 Our first point is whether or not  
15 there's a conservation concern for wolves. Our OSM  
16 justification says that increasing the harvest quota  
17 back to 30 percent is likely to create a conservation  
18 concern for wolves. However, I don't believe that the  
19 analysis that they provided for us as well as some of  
20 the discussion that we've had in the room today have  
21 actually indicated that that is true. In fact, some of  
22 the information that has been provided in some of the  
23 scientific research is that as long as wolf populations  
24 are healthy they can sustain a harvest of 30 percent.  
25  
26 Additionally, I've read through the  
27 comments that were provided in public testimony and I  
28 feel like in some respects they're a little misleading.  
29 This comment of mine kind of goes towards whether or  
30 not the Department or whether or not the current  
31 mechanism for managing or developing a quota or whether  
32 or not management of wolves is -- whether or not  
33 managers can actually manage wolves in Unit 2.  
34  
35 The public comment and the public  
36 testimony -- the written public comments indicate that  
37 it cannot be. I understand that this is a concern  
38 because if that could be shown to be true, then it  
39 could potentially lead to another ESA petition down the  
40 road. However, the numbers that they use are a little  
41 bit exploitive of what actually happened in Unit 2 for  
42 one year under these management guidelines where the  
43 quota was exceeded. It was exceeded, but it was not  
44 exceeded by two and a half times. The quota at the  
45 time was 22 wolves. The take was 29 wolves.  
46  
47 According to the Department, since this  
48 type of management system has been in place, that's  
49 only -- I shouldn't say it was according to the  
50

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1 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you for that,  
2 Cathy.  
3  
4 Mr. Douville.  
5  
6 MR. DOUVILLE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.  
7 Mr. Smith gave us some scientific testimony on deer  
8 populations and carrying capacities. He also said that  
9 wolf was not a real factor in that. It's mostly the  
10 habitat. When I grew up here and you look at this  
11 table on 85, from the 1930s up until the '60s there was  
12 quite a restriction on deer. The season was real  
13 short, September 1 to November 7. The limit was two.  
14  
15 I want to point out that there was no  
16 logging done on this island at that time. It was  
17 pristine when I was a young lad. The population of  
18 Craig was 150 up until the late '60s. Hyaburg was the  
19 same and Klawock, but that was the Prince of Wales  
20 population. Coffman Cove wasn't there, Thorne Bay, all  
21 those other places, so it was very restrictive hunting  
22 season and bag limit. But that was because of wolves.  
23  
24 I know those old-timers tell us how  
25 difficult it was to get deer. You see it change in the  
26 '50s when the Federal Fish and Game decided that they  
27 were going to eradicate the wolves on Unit 2 and they  
28 put some effort into it. It ended when we got close to  
29 Statehood. It went away, but you see the boost that it  
30 gave the deer population just by looking at that  
31 record.  
32  
33 So wolf does have a significant effect  
34 on deer populations. I'm not saying predator control.  
35 I was just making a point of information if you hadn't  
36 noticed that before. But Prince of Wales was pristine  
37 at that time and there was few deer.  
38  
39 I do intend to support this proposal.  
40 I think Cathy covered the four criteria.  
41  
42 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr.  
43 Douville.  
44  
45 I'm sorry, Mr. Schroeder, I didn't see  
46 you over there.  
47  
48 MR. SCHROEDER: It's okay. I talk a  
49 lot. I think Cathy did an excellent job of summarizing  
50

## Page 241

1 Department. According to Mr. Douville that's happened  
2 one other time. We never confirmed that, but I think  
3 it's relatively low of what it's ever happened to be.  
4  
5 I think the management history, for 15  
6 years from 2000 to 2015, where the quota was set at 30  
7 percent of the fall estimated population, I think there  
8 has been proof that it has been able to be managed  
9 under that sliding scale, that up to 30 percent.  
10  
11 So based on those things in addition to  
12 other information that we've just talked about, I don't  
13 believe at this time that there is a conservation  
14 concern for wolves in Unit 2.  
15  
16 Is the recommendation supported by  
17 substantial evidence such as biological and traditional  
18 knowledge. I think I just reiterated that the science  
19 shows up to 30 percent of a healthy wolf population can  
20 be taken. What we're asking is that quota be set at 30  
21 percent when populations are healthy, but we've  
22 incorporated that management flexibility that when wolf  
23 populations are not healthy that quota could be set at  
24 a lower than 30 percent level.  
25  
26 Further, the traditional ecological  
27 knowledge has played a huge part in this in terms of  
28 what we know from local trappers and local users on  
29 Prince of Wales Island and that information we've heard  
30 here as well as collected over the years that we've  
31 gotten public testimony with respect to wolves on  
32 Prince of Wales Island.  
33  
34 Will the recommendation be beneficial  
35 or detrimental to subsistence needs or users. I  
36 believe that it will be beneficial. When wolf  
37 populations are healthy, it allows again that  
38 management flexibility to provide more opportunities  
39 for subsistence users on Prince of Wales Island by  
40 having that quota be set at 30 percent. So that's  
41 providing more opportunity for subsistence users when  
42 wolf populations are high.  
43  
44 Again, we have a mechanism in place to  
45 assure that a conservation concern isn't created. When  
46 wolf populations are low, we can manage under that 30  
47 percent. By the same token, I don't believe that this  
48 recommendation will unnecessarily restrict other users.  
49  
50

## Page 243

1 our rationale for this. I have just a few things to  
2 add to that. Basically we're in this situation of  
3 dealing with wolves on Prince of Wales recurrently a  
4 lot because of land management issues, habitat change  
5 due to industrial-scale logging and likely changes that  
6 will take place on Prince of Wales as all clearcut  
7 areas fill in and become way less productive for all  
8 kinds of wildlife.  
9  
10 We also have to recognize that wolves  
11 on Prince of Wales do have a national constituency.  
12 That's a fact. Wolves are an iconic species and people  
13 are looking at what we do. I think this Council has  
14 been really good at making a record showing that at  
15 base the first thing that we consider is conservation  
16 and protection of the species. No one on this Council  
17 would like to eradicate wolves on Prince of Wales.  
18  
19 Mike did refer to the long Federal  
20 program that was aimed at eradicating wolves on Prince  
21 of Wales and basically everywhere, which included  
22 bounties on wolves and I believe dropping poison bates.  
23 That was probably the most significant Federal action  
24 dealing with wolves in this century apart from the  
25 desecration of the pristine habitat of Prince of Wales.  
26  
27 Our job is to provide subsistence  
28 opportunity when we can by increasing the possibility  
29 of more wolves being harvested would benefit  
30 subsistence users because they are the takers of wolves  
31 on Prince of Wales. It really isn't our job to figure  
32 out what the -- to completely evaluate the science of  
33 what a sustainable harvest would be.  
34  
35 We have heard from the Department, as  
36 Cathy mentioned, that with a healthy population of  
37 wolves a 30 percent harvest rate can be maintained.  
38 That's sort of I gathered from the global literature on  
39 wolves in many environments. We also have kind of  
40 close-up examples of the resiliency of wolves to  
41 respond to population declines and their ability to  
42 increase very rapidly.  
43  
44 It's kind of a side product of the  
45 inventory work that's been done and the monitoring, but  
46 the data presented has shown that wolves are capable of  
47 great resiliency. So that's our local experience,  
48 which would conform to the more global literature which  
49 suggests that 30 percent may be an acceptable harvest  
50

1 rate.

2  
3 I think that it's more than just a nice  
4 idea or that it's part of our charge to respond to our  
5 constituencies and we've had a good deal of input from  
6 tribal governments on Prince of Wales. We're fortunate  
7 to have expertise in this room of people who really  
8 know the island.

9 So I think beyond doing something  
10 that's just kind of nice or it fits with our mission, I  
11 think we really need to act because at present we have  
12 a one-year time lag in setting quotas for wolves. So  
13 the quota this year is based on last year's data. Given  
14 the resiliency of wolves and according to the data  
15 presented, wolves could perhaps double their population  
16 in one year. I don't know. Could they increase their  
17 population by 50 percent? Could they more than double?

18 It means that if the management  
19 structure is not there to allow an increase in harvest,  
20 we'd have to wait two years. We'd have to wait really  
21 a long time. What I'd like to see is that this setting  
22 a limit at up to 30 percent provides managers with the  
23 flexibility to respond to conditions on the ground  
24 possibly in advance of the compilation of precise  
25 survey monitoring data.

26 So I think we really need to act on  
27 this. I'll definitely support the proposal and perhaps  
28 after we vote on the proposal we could decide if we  
29 wish to suggest that Federal staff work with the  
30 Department to establish a population goal for wolves on  
31 Prince of Wales. It seems like it's something that  
32 would be very beneficial to all parties concerned, but  
33 it sounds like also you have like a lot of wrangling to  
34 do on that, so it's not something that you do in a  
35 meeting like this.

36 Thank you.

37 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Robert.

38 Mr. Reifensstuhl.

39 MR. REIFENSTUHL: Thank you. I have a  
40 question and then comments. So I'm trying to  
41 understand if we pass this then is the -- because it  
42 says up to 30 percent what is the expectation of the  
43  
44  
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1 Again, the science that we've heard and  
2 the science I'm aware of suggest with the healthy  
3 habitat that is there that the deer and the warm  
4 winters we've had there our tremendous numbers in deer  
5 have been increasing and this is not going to be a  
6 factor.

7 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Steve.  
8 We've got a little bit of an audio difficulty, so I'd  
9 like to take just a short break and then we'll resume.  
10 They've got to call the operator and try to straighten  
11 it out. The online people are having trouble hearing.

12 So we'll just take a quick break and  
13 try to fix that quickly.

14 Try to stay close.

15 (Off record)

16 (On record)

17 CHAIRMAN BANGS: I'd like to ask Ms.  
18 Hardin to give us some clarification.

19 MS. HARDIN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. For  
20 the record, I'm Jennifer Hardin, the Subsistence Policy  
21 Coordinator from the Office of Subsistence Management.  
22 Actually I just wanted to make a suggestion that might  
23 be helpful for the Federal Subsistence Board depending  
24 on how you act on this proposal.

25 In order for me to make that suggestion  
26 I just want to step back a little bit and remind you  
27 about the in-season management delegation of authority  
28 for this resource. Currently the in-season manager  
29 does not have delegated authority from the Federal  
30 Subsistence Board to set -- it's not clear whether they  
31 have the authority to set a Federal quota.

32 So if your intention is to support --  
33 to ask the Board to change those regulations so that  
34 there is a Federal quota established, then you may want  
35 to let the Board know how you would like that to  
36 transpire. Meaning currently there's a joint Federal  
37 and State quota that's established. If your intention  
38 with this proposal was to establish a Federal quota  
39 that's separate from the State, that should probably be  
40 clear to the Board.  
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1 Federal staff? How are they going to decide -- are  
2 they going to do 30 percent, are they dictated to do --  
3 that's not what it says if it says up to and we've  
4 already heard their recommendation that it should stay  
5 at 20 percent. So that's the question, how it's going  
6 to work on a practical sense. But I have comments, so  
7 maybe that question can't be answered right now.

8 Do you want me to keep going?

9 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Yeah.

10 MR. REIFENSTUHL: Okay. So I look at  
11 these four questions a little differently. I think  
12 given the information we've been given here today from  
13 experts, I mean the Department -- there's some very  
14 prominent names, not in this room, that have studied  
15 wolves in the '60s and that heavily influence the  
16 literature on wolves. Some prominent names are still  
17 -- they're in retirement but still around.

18 And then we had somebody from the  
19 University of Alaska and I think even though we have  
20 heard from local tribes we have heard a lot of  
21 scientific information that suggests that the  
22 population can sustain 30 percent if it gets to a  
23 certain level, but we've heard that it's not at that  
24 level now. It may get there.

25 I guess tangential to that I think a  
26 better routine would be to make a proposal to the Board  
27 of Game so it could be up to 30 percent. One big  
28 reason to get that is it's on a three-year cycle and if  
29 it were up to 30 percent, then they could react  
30 quicker. If the population does respond, I think it  
31 could be higher, right now the State would be locked  
32 into the 20 percent since it's in regulation.

33 But I do think the overwhelming science  
34 that we've heard today suggests that there could be a  
35 conservation concern and it's not ready -- that  
36 population on Prince of Wales is not ready for a 30  
37 percent harvest rate. So I believe that it really has  
38 been characterized as a predator control rather than  
39 the taking it to 30 percent and that will give more  
40 subsistence opportunity for harvest of wolves, which is  
41 true, but certainly many more comments are really about  
42 predator control so there will be more deer.  
43  
44  
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49  
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1 If your intention is to remain with a  
2 combined quota and you're talking now about up to 30  
3 percent, no more than 30 percent, you may want to  
4 provide some guidance to the Board about who would  
5 establish that percentage, whose responsibility it  
6 would be to set that number, and if you're requesting  
7 the in-season manager to do that, are you requesting  
8 for them to have the delegated authority from the  
9 Federal Subsistence Board to establish quotas.

10 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Is that clear to the  
11 Council?

12 (Council shaking heads no)

13 CHAIRMAN BANGS: No.

14 MS. HARDIN: Mr. Chair. Currently --  
15 and you may want to look at the regulation as it's  
16 proposed. Currently the regulation that's proposed  
17 reads that the total annual harvest of wolves in Unit 2  
18 should not exceed 30 percent of the most recent unit-  
19 wide, pre-season population estimate. That's the new  
20 language. Federal hunting and trapping season may be  
21 closed when the combined Federal-State harvest quota is  
22 reached. Any wolf taken in Unit 2 must be sealed within  
23 14 days of harvest.

24 So the proposed language doesn't say to  
25 establish as you all have talked about. It doesn't say  
26 to establish a 30 percent quota. It doesn't say to  
27 establish a quota that falls between 20 and 30 percent  
28 or 15 percent. There's a wide range and somebody is  
29 going to have to make that decision if it's adopted.  
30 So it would help the Board to know what your intent was  
31 with how this regulation would be implemented should it  
32 be adopted by the Federal Subsistence Board.

33 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Ms. Hardin.  
34 I think that makes things a little clearer. Does  
35 anybody have any questions for Ms. Hardin.

36 Steve.

37 MR. REIFENSTUHL: Let's see. It's one  
38 on terminology. We're saying set a quota and what  
39 we're talking about here is a harvest rate. Twenty  
40 percent or 30 percent is a harvest rate and it's  
41 dependent on a population number and then that becomes  
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1 I guess the quota. You could say that I suppose, but  
2 it's not really -- a harvest reg is not a quota.  
3 Terminology I think we should be -- if we're going to  
4 stick with this 30 percent, that's a harvest rate. If  
5 we don't have a population estimate, you can't apply a  
6 harvest rate.

7  
8 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you.

9  
10 Mr. Hernandez.

11  
12 MR. HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Mr.

13 Chairman. I appreciate the comments from Ms. Hardin.  
14 Those were questions that I had on my mind. It's  
15 something that we're going to have to deal with when we  
16 do vote on this. There are some real questions that  
17 are going to have to be resolved in my mind before we  
18 do vote on this.

19  
20 The question is whether or not we're in  
21 a conservation concern. In my view, I am kind of  
22 hesitant to say that we -- at least for this year  
23 whether we're to the point where we could be allowing a  
24 30 percent of the population harvest. For this year I  
25 think we're -- things are pretty well set. There's a  
26 20 percent harvest rate that's been agreed upon for  
27 this year and I think that's appropriate.

28  
29 I'm also a little bit concerned with  
30 this whole question of unreported harvest. If in the  
31 future we are able to increase to 30 percent harvest  
32 rate, I want to have some assurances that we have a  
33 really good handle on what this unreported take is. If  
34 we're going to go to a higher harvest rate, I'd kind of  
35 like assurances that we will be considering that in the  
36 future.

37  
38 With this proposal before us, I think  
39 we obviously want to avoid the situation where we do  
40 not have State and Federal regulations aligned. I  
41 think that would be a very bad situation, so we do need  
42 to be real clear in our recommendations to the Board.  
43 What we are doing does create the flexibility that  
44 we're looking for in setting these harvest rates and  
45 how to go about advising the Board right now as to how  
46 to approach that I think is going to be key to how I  
47 vote on this.

48  
49 So I think we need a little more  
50

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1 healthy wolf population could support a 30 percent  
2 harvest and what I meant to say was that a healthy wolf  
3 population can support a 30 percent mortality.

4  
5 So that is a little bit different.

6  
7 Regardless, I still feel that changing  
8 -- I still support changing the quota being from 20  
9 percent up to 30 percent, again allowing that  
10 management flexibility dependant upon what numbers are.

11  
12 I'd also like to add to this -- kind of  
13 reiterate what Mr. Douville was saying, is that I  
14 support this proposal, but I also want to make sure  
15 that we move forward in a way that we can continue to  
16 allow managers to work together on a joint harvest  
17 quota eventually, whether that be supporting this  
18 proposal at this time, but recommending delay of  
19 implementation of this proposal until after a Board of  
20 Game proposal can be adopted so that it does not  
21 necessarily put the hardship on creating separate  
22 harvest quotas between the Federal and State management  
23 systems. Meaning that we would recommend that we delay  
24 that -- we support it, but we delay that action until  
25 after the Board of Game process, which is coming up.

26  
27 I also support Mr. Douville saying that  
28 we need to develop a population goal for wolves on  
29 Prince of Wales Island. I believe that will take a  
30 little bit of time and may not happen within the  
31 current cycle of Board of Game to be implemented.

32  
33 That would be a question back to the  
34 Department, I guess, if they intend to be able to  
35 develop a population goal in the next year or so in  
36 order to have that information available for any Board  
37 of Game action that might happen subsequently to be  
38 implemented early or if we do need this stopgap measure  
39 for a whole Board of Game cycle over the next three  
40 years with that higher management flexibility of a 30  
41 percent quota.

42  
43 I just wanted to clarify that my  
44 support for this proposal has those kinds of  
45 contingencies on it because it's something that we're  
46 going to definitely have to figure out.

47  
48 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Cathy.

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1 discussion on that direction that we might provide the  
2 Board, so I think we need to have that discussion  
3 before I vote one way or another on this.

4  
5 I'd be interested in any thoughts on  
6 that line.

7  
8 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Don.

9  
10 Mike.

11  
12 MR. DOUVILLE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.  
13 I will support the 30 percent, but I am looking at it  
14 as a stopgap measure to get us to the point where we  
15 have something better, which would be a target  
16 population number. I believe that we need to submit a  
17 proposal to the Board of Game for 30 percent supporting  
18 what we're doing here so we can be on the same page.

19  
20 Also submit one with the intention of  
21 establishing that target population and that will iron  
22 out some of the bumps we have in the road we've had for  
23 the last I don't know how many years of struggling with  
24 this percentage. That is what I believe we need to do.

25  
26 There's no conservation concern. There  
27 seems to be some concern about that, but we're working  
28 off the year's before numbers. We've increased our  
29 population significantly since then, so I don't see a  
30 conservation concern with the 30 percent.

31  
32 We've got the best data to work with  
33 that we've had probably ever and I think it's a good  
34 time to use that to establish the target population,  
35 but we just need help getting there. We need help  
36 from the Federal Staff to help us get to that goal  
37 because I don't know how to do it myself. We know how  
38 to make a proposal to the Board of Game. We could make  
39 two proposals, trying to accomplish the 30 percent and  
40 as a better measure a target population goal.

41  
42 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mike.

43  
44 Cathy.

45  
46 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I  
47 do want to correct -- I put into my justification  
48 something erroneous and I do want to correct that. I  
49 referred to science and literature saying that a  
50

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1 Mr. Schroeder.

2  
3 MR. SCHROEDER: I think procedurally we  
4 could get all balled up here. The proposal is really  
5 simple and I'm prepared to support it as is. I think  
6 we need a major justification and intent written for  
7 this that covers a whole myriad of things that we've  
8 been talking about here. I don't see that those enter  
9 into the proposal exactly, but they should be part of  
10 what we're telling the Federal Subsistence Board and  
11 the public for how we want to proceed with this.

12  
13 I'm not exactly sure how to do that.  
14 We could vote the proposal up or down and have a  
15 workgroup gin something up to present by tomorrow at  
16 noon or if it was voted up, we could have a committee  
17 work on the intent and give that committee like a week  
18 or two. Otherwise, I think we may just get caught here  
19 talking about what if this and what if that and I'm  
20 concerned about that.

21  
22 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr.  
23 Schroeder.

24  
25 Patty and then Mr. Howard.

26  
27 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I  
28 support a wolf harvest quota of up to 30 percent with  
29 the goal of managing to a target population range of  
30 175-200 wolves or a harvestable surplus. In the  
31 interim, this is up to 30 percent harvest is an interim  
32 measure until the State and Federal managers can align.  
33 Best available science does not support a conservation  
34 concern at this time given incomplete hair analysis.  
35 The bias could go either way.

36  
37 We, as a RAC, have discussed and  
38 provided recommendations to the Federal program on  
39 wolves for a number of years and they've been very  
40 deliberative and unbiased discussions. The outcome has  
41 been a sustainable wolf harvest population in my  
42 opinion on Prince of Wales Island.

43  
44 The proposal provides increased  
45 subsistence opportunities when wolf populations are  
46 healthy and local qualified subsistence harvesters care  
47 about the sustainable harvest and sustainable wolf  
48 populations indicated by their participation at  
49 stakeholder meetings with State and Federal managers  
50

24 (Pages 248 to 251)



## Page 252

1 bringing their local knowledge and expertise to the  
2 discussion. This is a sustainable population proposal.

3  
4 Thank you.

5 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Patty.

6  
7 Albert.

8  
9 MR. HOWARD: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
10 It's been mentioned that the concern with -- there's no  
11 scientific numbers. It's been proven that 34 percent  
12 has been taken in the past and the wolf population has  
13 bounced back. Thirty-four percent meaning 30 wolves  
14 were taken out of the 89 that were estimated. That's  
15 34 percent.

16  
17 I mean I double checked it just to make  
18 sure.

19  
20 So we're going into 2018 and we're  
21 going to look at a 20 percent of the 230. That leaves  
22 180 wolves for the next year going into -- excuse me,  
23 2018. So even if you take 30 percent of the 180 that  
24 doesn't include the pups that will come out of the 180  
25 going into the summer and into the fall. If you take  
26 30 percent of that, that still leaves you 129, which  
27 means you're still above the 59 that happened in 2014.

28  
29 So there shouldn't be a conservation  
30 concern. I believe by passing this there will be  
31 common ground found by the stakeholders. It's been  
32 said, if you listen to them, they're working real hard  
33 to find a solution to this and common ground. I believe  
34 by allowing the 30 percent you're not going to  
35 eradicate the wolves.

36  
37 This is a pretty resilient wolf pack.  
38 You heard Mr. Douville talk about the 1950s they tried  
39 to eradicate them. Either they didn't have the right  
40 people doing it or the wolves are resilient.  
41 Definition of a vegetarian is a poor hunter, so maybe  
42 they had vegetarians trying to eradicate them in the  
43 '50s, but that's not the point I'm trying to make.

44  
45 I think the numbers speak for  
46 themselves. By supporting this we also recognize now  
47 the four tribal councils that want this. It isn't  
48 three anymore, it's four. Hydaburg has been a part of  
49  
50

## Page 254

1 one that makes the decision for the island, the way it  
2 is right now. Does that make sense?

3  
4 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you for that  
5 clarification, Terry. Other discussion.

6  
7 Don.

8  
9 MR. HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Mr.  
10 Chairman. My concern is for next year. How is the  
11 Board going to view this proposal. I mean our intent  
12 is to give flexibility in the management of up to  
13 30 percent. What do we want to see next year if  
14 there's a -- the State presumably will still have a 20  
15 percent harvest quota.

16  
17 One question we haven't asked is what  
18 is a realistic expectation for getting that State  
19 harvest quota changed through the Board of Game. I  
20 don't even know what cycle their in right now, how many  
21 years it would take. We've at least got a year next  
22 year where we have to decide.

23  
24 Do we want to recommend to the Board  
25 that they keep State and Federal alignment or do we  
26 want to tell the Board that we want a 30 percent quota  
27 on Federal lands for subsistence hunters regardless of  
28 what the State does. I think that's a serious question  
29 we're going to have to answer before we take this vote.

30  
31 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Don. I'd  
32 like to ask Mr. Scott if he could give us a timeline  
33 for the Board of Game.

34  
35 MR. SCOTT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and  
36 Council Members. I very much appreciate the effort you  
37 guys are all going through and we've all worked through  
38 this and it's obvious, as it always has been, this is a  
39 difficult subject and your work has not gone unnoticed.

40  
41 So for the Alaska Board of Game the  
42 Southeast Region proposals will be accepted. I think I  
43 mentioned before that as soon as we get through the  
44 first of the year we'll be in proposal mode for the  
45 next upcoming regional meeting. They'll be due to  
46 Board Support. Ms. Tibbles, who was here yesterday, be  
47 due to her by May 1, 2018 and then the meeting will be  
48 scheduled in January -- well, I'm not going to put the  
49 cart before the horse, but likely we will have a  
50

## Page 253

1 a lot of the studies working with the Board of Game. I  
2 like the process they're taking, but this will ensure  
3 that the process continues if we support the 30  
4 percent.

5  
6 I don't see a conservation concern.  
7 What I do see is the ability for subsistence users to  
8 in a way add revenue to their own pockets by allowing  
9 them to get a few more wolves. This may not mean a  
10 whole lot to some people, but if you add \$300 to a  
11 person's pocket that doesn't even have \$100, that's a  
12 big impact on their lives.

13  
14 In a way, subsistence is intended to  
15 ensure that their way of life in that rural community  
16 is maintained and they continue to exist. So I think  
17 in supporting this we're not going to hurt that  
18 population. Everything says that this population of  
19 wolves has been able to bounce back, so I don't think  
20 there's a conservation concern here.

21  
22 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

23  
24 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you for that,  
25 Albert.

26  
27 Patty.

28  
29 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Chairman  
30 Bangs. Currently there are two ranger districts in  
31 Unit 2, Thorne Bay and Craig. So if we're looking at  
32 an in-season manager or who holds delegated authority,  
33 would it be one or the other District Ranger or would  
34 it be a biologist? How is it normally handled?

35  
36 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Terry.

37  
38 MR. SUMINSKI: Through the Chair. Ms.  
39 Phillips. Terry Suminski with the Forest Service.  
40 Good question, Patty. The two Ranger Districts  
41 officially still are separate districts. However, the  
42 way they're staffed right now, Matt Anderson is the  
43 District Ranger for the Craig Ranger District and  
44 there's a deputy assigned to the Thorne Bay Ranger  
45 District.

46  
47 Essentially the way the letters were  
48 issued recently, there's one for each Ranger District,  
49 but for practical purposes the Ranger in Craig is the  
50

## Page 255

1 regional meeting in January 2019.

2  
3 Regulations that are adopted by the  
4 Board at that meeting, as long as there's no delayed  
5 implementation or something like that, will go into  
6 effect July 1, 2019.

7  
8 Lots of numbers flying around here  
9 today.

10  
11 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you for that  
12 clarification. John and then Steve or was Steve first?

13  
14 Steve, go ahead.

15  
16 MR. REIFENSTUHL: While Scott is at the  
17 table. I assume that the Board could adopt a 20-30  
18 percent or are there examples of other regulations that  
19 have that kind of flexibility?

20  
21 MR. SCOTT: Through the Chair. Member  
22 Reifensuhl. I don't know of examples off the top of  
23 my head, but I don't anticipate there would be any --  
24 there shouldn't be any barriers to that. You know, in  
25 a sense, and it's been discussed in testimony this  
26 morning and this afternoon, the way the regulation is  
27 written provides in a practical sense that flexibility  
28 and that sliding scale when the language says up to a  
29 certain harvest rate. Also I appreciate the  
30 clarification on that. It was very appreciated.

31  
32 I think what we've all talked about  
33 previously and today again is further clarifying that  
34 sliding scale. I actually think that's a good idea  
35 especially based on the discussions that we've heard.  
36 Thinking about the resource, the wolf numbers as well,  
37 if we're in a decline or down low, it's more  
38 appropriate to be here and to provide that use of the  
39 resource. If we're over here, then we can provide  
40 additional opportunity for that.

41  
42 I don't anticipate any barriers to it,  
43 but I apologize. Short of harvest rates or quotas  
44 really in this sense, they can vary year to year on  
45 lots of different populations. So it's not an unheard  
46 of premise that we'd be going to the Board with.

47  
48 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you.

## Page 256

1 Mr. Yeager and then Mr. Schroeder.  
 2  
 3 MR. YEAGER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
 4 This is not a question directed to you, but just more  
 5 of a comment. Our Staff stated that in the  
 6 justification a sentence that I continue to roll over  
 7 in my mind is the management of separate harvest quotas  
 8 between State and private and Federal lands will be  
 9 difficult for State and Federal managers as well as  
 10 confusing for the hunter and the trapper. I'm not in  
 11 favor of creating that kind of confusion and muddying  
 12 the waters. We're already in that too much already.  
 13  
 14 I'm not going to jump on the math train  
 15 because I suck at it really bad too, but one number  
 16 that no one I've heard recently use in their  
 17 calculation is the mortality to either illegal harvest  
 18 or death of wolves from human causes that are  
 19 unreported. Everybody is using the -- well, you have a  
 20 male and a female, they make this many pups and you  
 21 have this kind of an increase and all that and you  
 22 subtract the 30 percent or whatever out of that.  
 23  
 24 Well, there's one number in here that's  
 25 not being accounted for. It's my opinion that you're  
 26 leaving out a part of the mathematical equation and  
 27 that right there, 47 percent, even if you use 38  
 28 percent, what if that brings you down under 100 wolves.  
 29 What if it brings you down under 60 wolves or whatever.  
 30 Then I think we're leaving that out and I'm not  
 31 comfortable with supporting this having this part of  
 32 the equation left out.  
 33  
 34 Thank you.  
 35  
 36 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you.  
 37  
 38 Mr. Schroeder and then Cathy and then  
 39 Mr. Douville.  
 40  
 41 MR. SCHROEDER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
 42 Mr. Scott, do you think the Department would be  
 43 supportive of the idea of setting a population  
 44 objective or guideline population or I'm not sure  
 45 exactly what the term is? Because obviously if this --  
 46 it is part of what our discussion has been although  
 47 it's not our purview to put that in a proposal form.  
 48 Also, obviously, if the Department just said we don't  
 49 want to do that, it's unlikely that would proceed. So  
 50

## Page 258

1 MR. SCHROEDER: Just a quick follow up.  
 2 I don't think that it's wise, at least for this Council  
 3 Member, to suggest a number because I'm just not  
 4 knowledgeable enough. My notion would be I'd really  
 5 like to have Staff get together, Federal and State  
 6 Staff get together and get paid to spend weeks looking  
 7 over the data and the national and international  
 8 literature on this sort of thing. I wasn't thinking of  
 9 saying 150 or 250 or 2,000 at this moment.  
 10  
 11 Thank you.  
 12  
 13 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thanks, Bob.  
 14  
 15 Cathy.  
 16  
 17 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So  
 18 it sounds like there's some agreement about having a  
 19 population target to manage from. From what you just  
 20 said it sounds like it's going to take some time to  
 21 establish that through an appropriate process.  
 22  
 23 I want to clarify that that is not  
 24 going to happen before this next Board of Game cycle.  
 25 If that's true, at what point in time would being able  
 26 to manage on a target population be implementable  
 27 through the Board of Game process?  
 28  
 29 MR. SCOTT: Through the Chair. Member  
 30 Needham. I think it is accurate to say that it would  
 31 be unlikely we'd be done by the time the Board of Game  
 32 meeting rolls around in roughly a year. How that would  
 33 look beyond that is very difficult to even guess or  
 34 speculate really.  
 35  
 36 In regulation you'll find numerous  
 37 examples of where management plans have been adopted  
 38 into regulation, but oftentimes they're not. They're  
 39 endorsed or something along those lines because within  
 40 most management plans there's a lot of things that  
 41 constrict. We've talked several times about having  
 42 flexibility. While the management plan or strategy,  
 43 especially done with a transparent, open process like  
 44 that has an immense amount of power associated with it.  
 45  
 46 You can find yourself in a weird spot  
 47 with it. Sometimes it's not necessarily adopted into  
 48 regulation. Obviously, as we embark on something like  
 49 that, we're going to need somebody from the Regional  
 50

## Page 257

1 what's your take on that?  
 2  
 3 MR. SCOTT: Through the Chair. Member  
 4 Schroeder. That's why they call this the hot seat.  
 5  
 6 (Laughter)  
 7  
 8 MR. SCOTT: I can't necessarily speak  
 9 for where the Department as a whole is going to land on  
 10 that. I see no harm however in putting out a number to  
 11 discuss. But a process like we've been talking about,  
 12 I don't know that there's an appropriate shortcut to  
 13 get something in writing that we can start working with  
 14 right away.  
 15  
 16 And keeping in mind, again drawing on  
 17 some comments that have been made during deliberations,  
 18 there's a lot of interest in these wolves. Everywhere  
 19 from the on-the-ground users in the communities in Unit  
 20 2 to folks in Montana that are referencing this. I'm  
 21 certainly not going to let that kind of outside  
 22 influence if you will pressure us, but we need to be  
 23 deliberative in the process and think about all the  
 24 users.  
 25  
 26 I think there's so much good  
 27 information that's been put out here today. Again,  
 28 everything from on-the-ground folks, Mr. Cook, we've  
 29 had conversations and I'm very appreciative that he was  
 30 on the phone to times we spent in Craig and had those  
 31 discussions there. It's going to take a while.  
 32  
 33 I was asked earlier how long do I think  
 34 a process like that will take. I honestly don't know.  
 35 But I know if we're working towards that, and  
 36 especially in the focus that I think we have with at  
 37 least the folks in this room and I believe also in Unit  
 38 2, I actually think we'll get there. It's just going  
 39 to take some time.  
 40  
 41 So to wrap that all back up, I think  
 42 that if you have a number and certainly we've heard  
 43 several iterations of that, there's no harm, no foul, I  
 44 don't think, in putting it out there.  
 45  
 46 Thank you.  
 47  
 48 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Follow up, Bob.  
 49  
 50

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1 Advisory Council. I hope that would go unsaid. Likely  
 2 the Board of Game would want to participate in that.  
 3 At a minimum both bodies would be updated and kept  
 4 abreast of whatever process and steps had been taken,  
 5 progress had been made.  
 6  
 7 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Ryan.  
 8  
 9 Mike.  
 10  
 11 MR. DOUVILLE: Mr. Yeager mentioned  
 12 something, Don did too, about this perceived illegal  
 13 harvest. We need to have really good science, the best  
 14 available, for any increases in harvest. It's a  
 15 struggle. I would like to see the same methodology  
 16 used when it comes to establishing illegal harvest or  
 17 anything else to take away. So we don't see that.  
 18 It's just a theory.  
 19  
 20 So I don't have a problem if you can  
 21 document illegal harvest in any way or mortality,  
 22 anything to take away from the quota, but I want a  
 23 hard, scientific study just as well to increase it as  
 24 to take it away, okay.  
 25  
 26 Then I'm agreeable to it.  
 27  
 28 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr.  
 29 Douville.  
 30  
 31 Albert.  
 32  
 33 MR. HOWARD: Thank you, Mr. Chair. A  
 34 question for Mr. Scott. I know it's in Alaska that  
 35 you're bound by 20 percent, but yet in 2014 it went  
 36 over to 34 percent.  
 37  
 38 What happened when that happened?  
 39  
 40 MR. SCOTT: Through the Chair. Member  
 41 Howard. Was it 2014 or are we talking about last year?  
 42 Sorry. I'm just checking back through my notes too.  
 43  
 44 So if we are speaking to 2014, the  
 45 season, the harvest level was established at 25 wolves.  
 46 Ultimately, the harvest resulted in 30 wolves. So  
 47 there's a practical nature especially when it comes to  
 48 trapping. We saw some of this last year as well where  
 49 we understand that trappers put out X number of sets in  
 50

## Page 260

1 the field and that we're doing -- even with the  
2 constricted reporting or sealing requirement, we're  
3 going to miss some of that.

4 I guess in answer to your question  
5 nothing happened. We understand that X number of  
6 wolves over what we were hoping to stay within we took  
7 five additional wolves in that particular case.  
8 They're obviously accounted for in the harvest, but as  
9 long as there's nothing wrong with the harvest, it's  
10 just a sealing period issue really is what those  
11 generally result from.

12 And that's kind of the nature of  
13 trapping to be honest with you with an X number of sets  
14 out in the field and here and yonder and difficulty  
15 getting to them. I think by and large people do a  
16 reasonable job of letting us know when they're coming  
17 in. As an example of that we have a pretty good handle  
18 today on how many wolves have been taken this year so  
19 far out of Unit 2.

20 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you.

21 Patty.

22 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you. So getting  
23 back to Ms. Hardin's comments to the RAC, she was  
24 suggesting that we have some responses to the Federal  
25 Subsistence Board should this proposal pass. Who would  
26 set the separate quota or would it be a separate quota.  
27 I might be overspeaking, but it seems that we want a  
28 joint quota as we have now. So who would set that  
29 separate quota? If we have delegated authority to the  
30 Craig Ranger, so it would be a joint decision between  
31 the Craig District Ranger and who at the State? Who at  
32 the State makes that decision now?

33 MR. SCOTT: Through the Chair. Member  
34 Phillips. I think that's kind of the meat of at least  
35 this particular issue. It will put us in a position  
36 where rather than being in concert, which I think we  
37 all agree that hopefully we can stay there or get  
38 there, potentially for the foreseeable future we're  
39 going to diverge.

40 By State regulation, we can only  
41 provide up to 20 percent. That's where we have to stop.  
42 I have no reason to believe that I wouldn't have  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48  
49  
50

## Page 262

1 going to be.

2 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr. Scott.  
3 I haven't had a chance to really weigh in on anything.  
4 I spend most of my time trying to keep track of things.  
5 What I see in listening to the concerns about the split  
6 quotas and things, my perspective of seeing and hearing  
7 what we've been going through is maybe we could move  
8 this forward with the justification that we gave and  
9 then send along our justification as far as giving the  
10 Department the flexibility to manage up to 30 percent  
11 and then have the caveat to the Board not to implement  
12 this, if they choose to adopt it, until the Board of  
13 Game makes their actions.

14 Then we put in a Board of Game  
15 proposal.

16 That's just my own opinion as far as  
17 what I can come up with from listening to everybody.

18 Cathy.

19 MS. NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I  
20 was going to suggest the same thing. I think I've  
21 tried to bring that up one way or another. Supporting  
22 this proposal to take effect but delay implementation  
23 until after a proposal has gone through the Board of  
24 Game process.

25 If the Board of Game adopts the 30  
26 percent change, then we would have to drop this  
27 proposal because currently we don't have the 20 percent  
28 harvest in ours. If the Board of Game did adopt the 30  
29 percent, then essentially the effect of this proposal  
30 is we get what we supported as well as we don't mess up  
31 the system in terms of the joint harvest quota.

32 However, if the Board of Game does not  
33 adopt the 30 percent, we've still put our proposal  
34 forward where we want to have a 30 percent harvest  
35 quota for Federal Subsistence Program and we'll know in  
36 time, like after the Board makes its decision, then we  
37 would be able to provide the Federal Subsistence Board  
38 with the guidance that's needed in order to have more  
39 than one quota, having a quota in the Federal  
40 Subsistence Program and the State program.

41 I don't think we can actually do that  
42  
43  
44  
45  
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## Page 261

1 conversations with Ranger Anderson, who, by the way,  
2 has done an extremely good job in my opinion on the  
3 Forest Service side. He and his staff and working with  
4 us as well. But I think it sort of puts him, the  
5 District Ranger, as well as OSM in a very odd position.

6 Whereas our ability to provide harvest  
7 is up to 20 percent as it states now, that may very  
8 well change in the future, but obviously we'd be  
9 hopeful to participate in the conversation but there's  
10 a chance that ultimately they, I suppose, would have to  
11 decide what that appropriate level is knowing that we  
12 can only go to 20 percent at this point in time.

13 To answer another part of your  
14 question, who decides the quota now, it's a -- you  
15 know, this year was a little bit different. Based on  
16 the data we collected from last year's field season, we  
17 felt it was appropriate to provide up to the 20 percent  
18 level, the harvest rate up to 20 percent.

19 When we get that information, I have  
20 discussions with my leadership as well to make sure  
21 that we're in agreement that we think we can go that  
22 high and we think that's the appropriate thing to do  
23 for the users and the resource and then we also have a  
24 very -- following right on the heels of all that and  
25 this is happening you know this year. It happened like  
26 in an afternoon. We get the numbers and we're already  
27 behind and we want to get it on the street. That's a  
28 discussion we have with the Forest Service as well.

29 That's kind of the chain of events.  
30 The data comes from the lab, our biologist and  
31 statisticians analyze the data, they give us the  
32 estimate. We know where our legal bounds are, 20  
33 percent, we take into consideration everything that's  
34 going on, pass that through, make sure everybody is  
35 comfortable with where we're headed and then have a  
36 discussion with the Forest Service just to keep them  
37 posted.

38 Typically we would also -- and I  
39 haven't done this every year and I've owned that in  
40 front of this Council, but we would reach out to the  
41 tribal councils on Prince of Wales or go to Prince of  
42 Wales, which we did do this year. Again, it was a  
43 little bit weird because we could only provide up to  
44 the 20 percent and then decide where that quota is  
45  
46  
47  
48  
49  
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1 second half at this table, this meeting. It obviously  
2 is a very complex way of trying to diverge. We've got  
3 to kind of put the hope on the fact that the Board of  
4 Game will pass the proposal that we would put forward  
5 that includes the 30 percent based on our discussion  
6 and testimony here.

7 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Cathy.

8 MR. SCOTT: Through the Chair. Member  
9 Needham. I guess one thing that I would recommend  
10 potentially that the Council does in that regard is I  
11 think it would be appropriate to draft a letter to the  
12 Board. Without going into detail ad nauseam what was  
13 discussed here, certainly lay out your thought process  
14 and your plan and even the contingency part of it and  
15 let them know it's coming.

16 Certainly I'll do my part to let them  
17 know as well.

18 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you. Anyone, do  
19 you have any thoughts. Any more discussion.

20 Mr. Reifensuhl.

21 MR. REIFENSTUHL: Well, I can't support  
22 that because if the Board of Game doesn't pass it, then  
23 we're still at odds between the State and the Federal  
24 system. We've heard a lot of sentiment on this Council  
25 that we don't want to do that. I guess I've never  
26 heard an agency like Fish and Game/Wildlife and their  
27 ability and kind offers of working with people on the  
28 ground and offers to really look at what everyone is  
29 saying and even telegraphing that they support this  
30 idea and I think taken them at their word, I think that  
31 a Board of Fish proposal is the best way to go.

32 I think being at odds it just sets it  
33 up for that potential and I can't support that.

34 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Board of Game?

35 MR. REIFENSTUHL: Board of Game.

36 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Did Ms. Hardin have  
37 something to enlighten us?

38 MS. HARDIN: I don't know if I'm going  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48  
49  
50

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1 to enlighten you. Jennifer Hardin for the record. I  
2 just wanted to put out there that if this proposal went  
3 to the Federal Subsistence Board, another option they  
4 would have in front of them would be to defer action on  
5 the proposal until a decision was made on a companion  
6 Board of Game proposal, which means it would come back  
7 in front of the Board after the Board of Game decision  
8 and then they would not act on it.

9 You have a motion on the table, so I  
10 recognize you have to act on your motion, but those  
11 sorts of recommendations are also available to this  
12 Council to provide that as your recommendation to the  
13 Federal Subsistence Board. But you do have a motion on  
14 the table in support of this proposal currently.

15 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you.

16 Don.

17 MR. HERNANDEZ: I think there's kind of  
18 one obvious thing will occur here. If we pass this  
19 proposal and make our wishes known to the Board that we  
20 want to see alignment with State and Federal regs, but  
21 if the State does not comply, we want the Federal  
22 management to institute this 30 percent harvest quota.

23 If the Board doesn't want to be put in  
24 that position, they'll just defeat this proposal, plain  
25 and simple. So we are giving them that option as to  
26 whether or not they want to be in that position or not  
27 because they will just take that into their own hands  
28 when they decide on this proposal.

29 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Mike.

30 MR. DOUVILLE: I'm just responding to  
31 what you said. We're at odds at different times with  
32 State regulation although we try to work together  
33 there's some areas where we do not align. An example  
34 would be steelhead trout and things like that. We have  
35 tried to work to keep things less confusing for the  
36 good of resources and users to try to work together,  
37 but there's nothing that says we have to.

38 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mike. Any  
39 other comments, discussion.

40 Mr. Howard.

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1 MR. HOWARD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.  
2 The reason I asked what happened when they actually  
3 caught 30 percent of the 89 that was there and nothing  
4 happened, I'm hearing concern about where you're  
5 putting one agency against another. We seem to be  
6 forgetting the person that put this forward. We're  
7 forgetting the four local tribes that sent resolutions  
8 to us saying this is important to our well-being of our  
9 tribal members.

10 There's two levels here. The State of  
11 Alaska does not recognize at this point that the  
12 government-to-government relationship that's supposed  
13 to exist between the Federally recognized tribes and  
14 government agencies and entities. There's executive  
15 orders that say you're supposed to consult with  
16 Federally recognized tribes in certain areas.

17 I appreciate Mr. Scott and his effort  
18 to find common ground here. That speaks loudly for the  
19 Department and the willingness to find common ground so  
20 everybody leaves the table feeling like they've  
21 accomplished what they've come to accomplish. I think  
22 it's important that -- and I've asked for Mr. Cook if  
23 he was online for a reason.

24 I wanted to know if they put proposals  
25 in front of the Board of Game. There's reasons I asked  
26 that because we've put proposals in, as an example, to  
27 the Board of Fish year in, year out and they've never  
28 seen the light of day. I understand the process  
29 forwards and backwards.

30 Things have gotten so bad at home that  
31 the three organizations are working together. The  
32 city, the tribe and the Native corporation each put  
33 three proposals in front of the Board of Fish and none  
34 of them saw the light of day except for the one that  
35 was most likely not to succeed and that was to shut  
36 down Chatham Strait to commercial fishing. We knew  
37 that wasn't going to succeed.

38 I'm explaining the process because I  
39 understand it and that's why I asked if Mr. Cook has  
40 put any of his proposals in front of the Board of Game  
41 concerning wolves. There's a reason why four  
42 organizations have put this proposal in front of us and  
43 I want to know if that reason is because they weren't  
44 heard at the Board of Game. There's a valid concern

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1 here. The numbers speak to show the wolves will  
2 survive even when they hit 59. These are their  
3 numbers, not mine. I don't live on Prince of Wales,  
4 but I hear them through their resolution.

5 If we implement the 30 percent, nothing  
6 is going to happen even though Alaska statute says it  
7 should be 20. Nothing is going to happen. Mr. Scott  
8 had said that because I asked him. By putting 30  
9 percent on the table all it does is give the Ranger at  
10 the time a benchmark. So next year when you look at  
11 the 30 percent of 184, that gives us -- you know, the  
12 Ranger can stop trapping when the number hits 129,  
13 which is still above 59 that's been demonstrated it was  
14 able to bounce back to 320.

15 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Excuse me, Mr. Howard.  
16 Do you have any new information?

17 MR. HOWARD: Mr. Chairman. I'm saying  
18 this because it seems like -- sometimes it feels like  
19 I'm out in the hallway talking to myself because I  
20 listen to others and they say there's no numbers to  
21 support any of this. I don't have any Magic Markers or  
22 anything to put it up here where we can look at it  
23 together. The reason I'm doing this is because  
24 sometimes it seems like you're being listened to but  
25 you're not heard.

26 Thank you, Mr. Chair.

27 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you for that,  
28 Albert. Any other comments.

29 Mr. Douville.

30 MR. DOUVILLE: Mr. Chair. I support  
31 this proposal as is. I'm not interested in confounding  
32 the issue. We have the tribes behind us, we have  
33 subsistence users that are supporting it. Everybody is  
34 supporting it. If the State can get on board with it,  
35 there may be a little bit of lag time, but I think we  
36 should move on.

37 CHAIRMAN BANGS: The question has been  
38 called for on Proposal WP18-04.

39 Can we get a roll call, please, Harvey.

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1 MR. KITKA: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
2 Cathy Needham.

3 MS. NEEDHAM: Whoa! Cheater!

4 (Laughter)

5 MS. NEEDHAM: Yea.

6 MR. KITKA: Michael Bangs.

7 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Yes.

8 MR. KITKA: John Yeager.

9 MR. YEAGER: No.

10 MR. KITKA: Raymond Sensmeier.

11 MR. SENSMEIER: Yes.

12 MR. KITKA: Donald Hernandez.

13 MR. HERNANDEZ: Yes.

14 MR. KITKA: Albert Howard.

15 MR. HOWARD: Yes.

16 MR. KITKA: Robert Schroeder.

17 MR. SCHROEDER: Yes.

18 MR. KITKA: Harvey Kitka votes yes.

19 Michael Douville.

20 MR. DOUVILLE: Yes.

21 MR. KITKA: Patricia Phillips.

22 MS. PHILLIPS: Yes.

23 MR. KITKA: Steve Reifensstuhl.

24 MR. REIFENSTUHL: No.

25 MR. KITKA: Mr. Chair. The vote is 9  
26 to 2 and passes.

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1 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Harvey.  
 2  
 3 Mr. Hernandez, comment.  
 4  
 5 MR. HERNANDEZ: Yeah, Mr. Chairman. I  
 6 don't know if it's necessary to make a motion, but I do  
 7 think it's important that we do include with this our  
 8 recommendations to the Board as to how we'd like to see  
 9 it implemented, so I don't know how to go about doing  
 10 that.  
 11  
 12 CHAIRMAN BANGS: The Vice Chair just  
 13 mentioned a very good possibility of making a work  
 14 group that we could work on something to bring before  
 15 the Council tomorrow. Work on it tonight. Anyone  
 16 interested in being part of that workgroup if that's  
 17 the wish of the Council. Any ideas. Don.  
 18  
 19 MR. HERNANDEZ: I'd be willing to  
 20 participate in a workgroup, yes.  
 21  
 22 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Anyone else. Patty.  
 23 Mr. Schroeder.  
 24  
 25 MR. SCHROEDER: I'd (away from  
 26 microphone).  
 27  
 28 MR. DOUVILLE: I'll do that.  
 29  
 30 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. Mr. Douville.  
 31 Sounds good. Okay. We have a few people that are  
 32 willing to step up to the plate and have a workgroup.  
 33 Cathy, do you want to as well?  
 34  
 35 MS. NEEDHAM: No.  
 36  
 37 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Bob.  
 38  
 39 MR. SCHROEDER: Perhaps if the charge  
 40 of the workgroup, since we're partying tonight....  
 41  
 42 (Laughter)  
 43  
 44 MR. SCHROEDER: .....is that we may not  
 45 have final language, but if we have like points and  
 46 then we could spend a little bit of time, as we've done  
 47 with other proposals, after the meeting working out a  
 48 more convincing justification. That's just a  
 49 suggestion.  
 50

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1 Terry got on, but this is Jeff Reeves with the Forest  
 2 Service. I'm actually the analyst on the proposal.  
 3  
 4 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. Great. Go  
 5 ahead.  
 6  
 7 MR. REEVES: All right. So this  
 8 Proposal WP18-05 the executive summary is on Page 181.  
 9 The analysis begins on Page 183. It's actually real  
 10 similar to the one that you took up earlier this  
 11 morning. This one is related to Unit 3.  
 12  
 13 It's a proposal that was submitted by  
 14 this Council and it's asking that both the Federal  
 15 hunting and trapping seasons be lengthened for wolves  
 16 in Unit 3 to match those currently under State  
 17 regulations. It would pretty much extend the Federal  
 18 hunting season to the end of May and forwards the  
 19 opening date on the Federal trapping season to November  
 20 1st.  
 21  
 22 The Federal Subsistence Board has not  
 23 made a customary and traditional use determination for  
 24 wolves in Unit 3 so all rural residents of the state  
 25 can harvest the species.  
 26  
 27 The Board adopted existing State  
 28 hunting and trapping regulations for Unit 3 in 1990. In  
 29 2010, the Board rejected a couple proposals, which  
 30 would have shortened both the Federal hunting and  
 31 trapping seasons for wolves in this unit.  
 32  
 33 Current estimates of the Unit 3 wolf  
 34 population are based on average territory and pack size  
 35 which is kind of derived from wolf research conducted  
 36 in similar habitat on Unit 2. Past conversations with  
 37 trappers, hunters, pilots and other biologists, along  
 38 with information obtained through trapper  
 39 questionnaires, seem to suggest that wolf numbers  
 40 increased in the unit during the 1990s in a response  
 41 deer numbers. More recently, increases in moose  
 42 abundance and their distribution are believed to have  
 43 helped to sustain high wolf numbers in the unit.  
 44  
 45 In most years, trapping is the primary  
 46 method of harvesting  
 47 wolves in Unit 3, with access to those locations being  
 48 by boat. Some years, however, the number taken with  
 49 the use of a firearm has exceeded those taken by  
 50

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1 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Bob.  
 2  
 3 Cathy.  
 4  
 5 MS. NEEDHAM: Yes, Mr. Chair. When I  
 6 so quickly said workgroup, I should have also said that  
 7 our workgroups have typically including Staff to help  
 8 with that and it might be good to invite one or two of  
 9 our Staff to help our workgroup participants work  
 10 through that process of making those recommendations to  
 11 make sure that we know to help with that piece of the  
 12 process.  
 13  
 14 I'd also like to put on the record or  
 15 however we need to make the decision that the Regional  
 16 Advisory Council actually put forward a proposal to the  
 17 Board of Game.  
 18  
 19 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Cathy. Any  
 20 other comments. I'd like to take a little break here  
 21 if we're done with this particular subject.  
 22  
 23 (No comments)  
 24  
 25 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. We'll take a  
 26 10-minute recess.  
 27  
 28 (Off record)  
 29  
 30 (On record)  
 31  
 32 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Please take your  
 33 seats. I'd like to take a moment here to ask if  
 34 there's anyone that has any public or tribal comments  
 35 on non-agenda items either on the phone or in the room.  
 36  
 37 (No comments)  
 38  
 39 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Hearing none. We'll  
 40 move on to the next proposal. We're at Wildlife  
 41 Proposal 18-05, lengthening hunting and trapping season  
 42 for wolves in Unit 3. Is Staff going to give the  
 43 analysis to us in the room or online?  
 44  
 45 MR. REEVES: Mr. Chairman.  
 46  
 47 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Yes.  
 48  
 49 MR. REEVES: Hi. I was waiting in case  
 50

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1 conventional trapping methods. Most of the wolves taken  
 2 by hunters are harvested opportunistically during hunts  
 3 for other species.  
 4  
 5 Harvest has been reported in all  
 6 months, with the majority of the May harvest being  
 7 taken by nonresidents. It's believed that pelt quality  
 8 in May is reduced which explains why there's probably  
 9 such a low level of harvest by Federally qualified  
 10 subsistence users.  
 11  
 12 If adopted, this proposal would provide  
 13 increased harvest opportunity for Federally qualified  
 14 users in Unit 3. The proposal is unlikely to  
 15 substantially increase the harvest of wolves in the  
 16 unit because Federally qualified users can already  
 17 harvest on the same lands under the same timeframe  
 18 under the State regulations.  
 19  
 20 Federal regulations, as I mentioned in  
 21 the first proposal this morning, also allow for  
 22 customary trade and it is not allowed under State  
 23 regulation, so any wolves harvested under this new  
 24 regulation could be used for customary trade. Adoption  
 25 of the proposal is unlikely to substantially increase  
 26 the harvest of wolves over present level due to the  
 27 pelt condition.  
 28  
 29 Harvest during May when wolves are  
 30 denning could possibly result in mortality of breeders  
 31 or helper animals that are influential to the pack  
 32 persistence and denning during that time.  
 33  
 34 Staff recommendation is to support the  
 35 proposal. Adoption of the proposal will bring the  
 36 Federal hunting and trapping seasons for Unit 3 into  
 37 alignment with State regulations. Adoption of the  
 38 proposal would allow subsistence users to engage in  
 39 customary trade should they desire from any wolves  
 40 harvested on Federal lands during the expanded seasons.  
 41  
 42 Wolf harvest in the unit is currently  
 43 believed to be occurring at a sustainable level based  
 44 on anecdotal accounts. Harvests in both November and  
 45 May are currently very low in comparison to harvest  
 46 during the other months. Alignment of Federal  
 47 regulations with the State regulations should not  
 48 dramatically increase those harvests beyond current  
 49 levels.  
 50

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1 That concludes my presentation.  
 2  
 3 Thank you.  
 4  
 5 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Jeff.  
 6  
 7 Any questions from the Council.  
 8  
 9 (No comments)  
 10  
 11 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Hearing none. Thank  
 12 you again. Is there any reports from consultations  
 13 from the tribes or ANCSA corporations?  
 14  
 15 (No comments)  
 16  
 17 CHAIRMAN BANGS: None. Agency comments  
 18 from Alaska Department of Fish and Game. Would this be  
 19 Rich?  
 20  
 21 MR. LOWELL: Mr. Chairman. This is  
 22 Rich Lowell in Petersburg. I'll provide a brief  
 23 comment if you'd like.  
 24  
 25 CHAIRMAN BANGS: We would appreciate  
 26 that, Rich. Thank you.  
 27  
 28 MR. LOWELL: Okay. For the record once  
 29 again my name is Richard Lowell. I am the area  
 30 biologist for Alaska Department of Fish and Game,  
 31 Division of Wildlife Conservation in Petersburg with  
 32 oversight for Game Management Units 1B and 3. I'll  
 33 provide a brief overview of the Unit 3 wolf harvest,  
 34 talk a little bit about the hunting season extension  
 35 and finally the trapping season extension.  
 36  
 37 Since 2006 the Unit 3 wolf harvest has  
 38 averaged 59 wolves annually ranging from a low of 21 to  
 39 a high of 96 wolves per year. In general,  
 40 approximately 30 percent of wolves are harvested  
 41 annually in Unit 3 with firearms while 70 percent are  
 42 trapped. There are no conservation concerns for wolves  
 43 in Game Management Unit 3.  
 44  
 45 In 2011, the hunting season for wolves  
 46 was extended by one month until the end of May. The  
 47 hunting season was extended to reduce wolf predation on  
 48 depressed bear populations by affording the annual  
 49 influx of spring bear hunters and other users the  
 50

## Page 274

1 you. Are there any Federal agencies that have  
 2 comments.  
 3  
 4 (No comments)  
 5  
 6 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Tribal entities.  
 7 Native, tribal, village or other.  
 8  
 9 MS. PERRY: None received, Chair.  
 10  
 11 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Any other Regional  
 12 Councils, Fish and Game Advisory Committee comments or  
 13 Subsistence Resource Commissions.  
 14  
 15 MS. PERRY: None received, Mr. Chair.  
 16  
 17 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Written public  
 18 comments, please.  
 19  
 20 MS. PERRY: Yes, Mr. Chair and Council.  
 21 We received three written comments on Wildlife Proposal  
 22 18-05. One was a general public comment from Curtis  
 23 Donald Thomas of Ketchikan addressing all Southeast  
 24 proposals. Key viewpoints were that attempts were  
 25 being made to fix a problem that does not exist and he  
 26 expressed concerns regarding new classes of citizens  
 27 with special hunting rights being created. He also  
 28 expressed concern about residency criteria and the  
 29 ability of some Alaskans to harvest 20 halibut a day.  
 30  
 31 Two additional written public comments  
 32 in opposition were received from Fairbanks residents  
 33 Sharon Alden and Jim Kowalsky for Alaskans for  
 34 Wildlife.  
 35  
 36 Viewpoints included the the enforcement  
 37 of past quotas have been poorly managed and more  
 38 pressure on a wolf population already in trouble  
 39 appears to be contrary to the basic concept of wildlife  
 40 management.  
 41  
 42 That concludes the written public  
 43 comments received, Mr. Chair.  
 44  
 45 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Ms. Perry.  
 46 Is there any public testimony from anyone in the room.  
 47  
 48 (No comments)  
 49  
 50

## Page 273

1 opportunity to harvest wolves while bear hunting in  
 2 May. Since 2011 an average of five wolves per year  
 3 have been taken by hunters in Unit 3 during May.  
 4  
 5 Of the 33 total bears taken during the  
 6 month of May since the season was extended, 82 percent  
 7 were taken by nonresident hunters, primarily  
 8 nonresident black bear hunters, 9 percent were taken by  
 9 Federally qualified users and another 9 percent were  
 10 taken by nonrural Alaska residents.  
 11  
 12 In 2009, the trapping season was  
 13 extended from a November 10th start date to a November  
 14 1st start date throughout Region 1 excluding Unit 4  
 15 where wolves are absent. Prior to the 2009 extension  
 16 of the wolf trapping season, on average three wolves  
 17 were trapped annually in Unit 3 during the month of  
 18 May. Since the November 1st season extension took  
 19 effect, the harvest has increased only slightly,  
 20 averaging four wolves per year.  
 21  
 22 As previously stated, despite the  
 23 earlier November 1st opener for wolf trapping, most  
 24 trappers do not set traps or snares for wolves until  
 25 after the conclusion of the waterfowl season in order  
 26 to avoid catching duck dogs and to avoid catching early  
 27 bears in early November.  
 28  
 29 The Department supports this proposal  
 30 to align Federal and State wolf hunting and trapping  
 31 regulations in Unit 3 as the change in Federal  
 32 regulations is unlikely to have a significant effect on  
 33 the wolf harvest or hunting and trapping opportunity  
 34 for wolves in Unit 3. Federally qualified hunters and  
 35 trappers are already authorized to take wolves during  
 36 the proposed season dates under State regulation.  
 37  
 38 Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
 39  
 40 Back to you and I will be happy to  
 41 address any questions you or members of the Council may  
 42 have.  
 43  
 44 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Rich. Any  
 45 questions for Mr. Lowell from the Council.  
 46  
 47 (No comments)  
 48  
 49 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Hearing none. Thank  
 50

## Page 275

1 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Is there any public  
 2 testimony from the teleconference phone.  
 3  
 4 (No comments)  
 5  
 6 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Hearing none. We'll  
 7 move on to the wish of the Council.  
 8  
 9 Mr. Douville.  
 10  
 11 MR. DOUVILLE: Mr. Chair. Move to  
 12 adopt Proposal WP18-05.  
 13  
 14 MR. YEAGER: Second.  
 15  
 16 CHAIRMAN BANGS: The proposal by Mr.  
 17 Douville and seconded by Member Yeager.  
 18  
 19 Discussion.  
 20  
 21 Mr. Schroeder.  
 22  
 23 MR. SCHROEDER: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
 24 I think this is almost just a housekeeping proposal and  
 25 I'll support it. The goal of the Council is to align  
 26 Federal regulations with State regulations where we  
 27 could do so without adverse effects on subsistence  
 28 users. I believe that that's what this proposal does,  
 29 so I think we can vote it up and give the official  
 30 justifications.  
 31  
 32 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you. Any other  
 33 discussion.  
 34  
 35 (No comments)  
 36  
 37 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Do you feel we've  
 38 covered the justification enough?  
 39  
 40 (No comments)  
 41  
 42 MR. KITKA: Question.  
 43  
 44 CHAIRMAN BANGS: The question has been  
 45 called for. We'll just do a yea or nay. All those in  
 46 favor of adopting the proposal respond by saying aye.  
 47  
 48 IN UNISON: Aye.  
 49  
 50

## Page 276

1 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Opposed.  
 2  
 3 (No opposing votes)  
 4  
 5 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Motion carries.  
 6 Moving on to the next proposal. We did the black bear  
 7 in Unit 2 proposal yesterday. We'll do WP18-09, limited  
 8 designated hunter harvest limits for deer in Units 1B  
 9 and 3.  
 10  
 11 Mr. Suminski.  
 12  
 13 MR. SUMINSKI: Good afternoon, Mr.  
 14 Chairman. Council Members. My name is Terry Suminski  
 15 with the Forest Service. Sorry for missing the last  
 16 proposal. Proposal WP18-09 requests that the Federal  
 17 designated hunting provisions limit the number of  
 18 Federally qualified recipients that a designated hunter  
 19 may hunt deer for in Units 1B and 3. This was  
 20 submitted by the Wrangell Fish and Game Advisory  
 21 Committee.  
 22  
 23 The analyst is Justin Koller.  
 24  
 25 MR. KOLLER: Good afternoon, Chairman  
 26 Bangs. Members of the Council. For the record, my  
 27 name is Justin Koller. I'm a subsistence biologist for  
 28 the United States Forest Service, specifically for  
 29 Sitka and Hoonah Ranger Districts of the Tongass  
 30 National Forest.  
 31  
 32 The executive summary for WP18-09 can  
 33 be found on Page 211 of your books. The analysis  
 34 begins on Page 213. As Mr. Suminski indicated, WP18-09  
 35 was submitted by Wrangell Fish and Game Advisory  
 36 Committee, requesting Federal designated hunting  
 37 provisions limit the number of Federally qualified  
 38 recipients that a designated hunter may hunt deer for  
 39 in Units 1B and 3.  
 40  
 41 The Federal Designated Hunter Program  
 42 currently does not have a restriction on number of  
 43 recipients. This proposal requests to limit the number  
 44 of recipients to a maximum of five in Units 1B and 3.  
 45  
 46 The proponent stated the following  
 47 three reasons for this proposal. Number one, the  
 48 designated hunter program allows for over exploitation  
 49 of deer within Units 1B and 3. Number two, some  
 50

## Page 278

1 single digits annually and make up a very small  
 2 percentage of overall harvest in that Unit.  
 3  
 4 Unit 3 deer harvest by Federal  
 5 designated hunters makes up a higher percentage of  
 6 overall harvest compared to Unit 1B. However the  
 7 average number of deer harvested per Federal designated  
 8 hunter permit in Unit 3 is low.  
 9  
 10 Further, no more than two Federal  
 11 designated hunters report harvesting for five or more  
 12 recipients annually in these units. This suggests that  
 13 limiting designated hunters to five recipients would  
 14 affect very few hunters and consequently have little  
 15 effect on the deer population.  
 16  
 17 The OSM preliminary conclusion is to  
 18 oppose Proposal WP18-09. There is no need to restrict  
 19 the traditional practice of hunting for others because  
 20 doing so will likely have no measurable effect on the  
 21 deer population. The number of deer taken annually by  
 22 designated hunters is small compared to the total  
 23 harvest. Designated hunters rarely report harvesting  
 24 for more than five recipients.  
 25  
 26 Adopting this proposal would also not  
 27 address the proponent's concern about edible meat not  
 28 being salvaged as this is addressed through law  
 29 enforcement.  
 30  
 31 That concludes my presentation on this  
 32 proposal.  
 33  
 34 Thank you and I welcome your comments  
 35 and questions.  
 36  
 37 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Justin.  
 38  
 39 Anyone have any questions.  
 40  
 41 (No comments)  
 42  
 43 CHAIRMAN BANGS: I have one question.  
 44 There's rumors, and I know Mr. Yeager is aware of it,  
 45 that there's been some abuse of this program and I  
 46 don't see this data reflecting that, so maybe it's just  
 47 rumor, but it seemed like there's a considerable amount  
 48 of deer harvested by a couple different individuals and  
 49 I think that's where this proposal came from, but I'm  
 50

## Page 277

1 hunters use the designated hunting system to take  
 2 upwards of 40-50 deer in a hunting season, sometimes  
 3 taking only the hind quarters and back straps. Number  
 4 three, deer populations in these units will increase by  
 5 limiting the number of recipients a  
 6 designated hunter may harvest for during a season.  
 7 This will allow more hunters to be successful while  
 8 taking less time to harvest their annual limit.  
 9  
 10 In 2002, proposals WP02-04, -05, and  
 11 -06, three proposals, sought to limit either the  
 12 eligibility of designated hunter recipients or the  
 13 number of recipients a designated hunter could hunt for  
 14 in a year. WP02-10 in 2002 sought the prohibition of  
 15 designated hunting within a portion of Unit 3.  
 16  
 17 Later on in 2012, statewide proposal  
 18 WP12-02 requested to limit the eligibility of  
 19 designated hunting recipients while WP12-13 requested  
 20 to limit the number of recipients for whom a designated  
 21 hunter could harvest deer for in Units 1B and Unit 3.  
 22 That proposal, similar to this proposal, requested to  
 23 limit recipients per designated hunter to two.  
 24  
 25 All of these proposals were opposed by  
 26 this Council and rejected by the Federal Subsistence  
 27 Board.  
 28  
 29 Deer in Unit 1B exhibit low population  
 30 densities but are believed to be stable. The left side  
 31 of Table 1 on Page 218 shows that deer harvest in Unit  
 32 1B has remained low, suggesting that harvest is not the  
 33 primary driver of deer population levels.  
 34  
 35 Deer harvest in Unit 3 has remained  
 36 relatively stable with a slight increase in the past  
 37 few years, possibly reflecting an increased population.  
 38 Both units were subject to harsh winter conditions in  
 39 2006 to 2009, which caused a decline in deer  
 40 populations. Data suggests that deer populations are  
 41 rebounding from that decline and there have been no  
 42 harvest restrictions.  
 43  
 44 Harvest regulations outlined on Page  
 45 216 are conservative in these units with buck only  
 46 hunts and limited seasons in portions of Unit 3. Deer  
 47 harvest in Units 1B and 3 is outlined once again in  
 48 Table 1 on Page 218. Harvest within the Federal  
 49 Designated Hunter Program from Unit 1B has been in the  
 50

## Page 279

1 not really sure if that's the case. Did you find  
 2 anything that was a discrepancy?  
 3  
 4 MR. KOLLER: Mr. Chair. Members of the  
 5 Council. I did not find anything in my analysis that  
 6 suggested that the program was being abused. Now that  
 7 doesn't necessarily mean it is not abused. If it is  
 8 indeed abused, it's not being reported of course to us.  
 9 So by limiting the number of recipients a designated  
 10 hunter could hunt for would not have the desired effect  
 11 of eliminating abuse of the program that goes  
 12 unreported anyway.  
 13  
 14 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you. Any  
 15 questions.  
 16  
 17 Mr. Douville.  
 18  
 19 MR. DOUVILLE: The proponent says that  
 20 upwards of 40 to 50 deer. Have you seen any designated  
 21 hunters that hunted for 19 different people?  
 22  
 23 MR. KOLLER: We have not, no. As I  
 24 said, in those units there are only a maximum of two  
 25 people in the past few years have reported harvesting  
 26 for more than five recipients. I think you can find  
 27 the answer to your question also on Table 1, which is  
 28 Page 218 under Unit 3 on the right-hand side of the  
 29 table, you can see the maximum number of recipients  
 30 that designated hunters have harvested for since I  
 31 believe 2010.  
 32  
 33 So the maximum is 11.  
 34  
 35 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you. Any other  
 36 questions.  
 37  
 38 Steve.  
 39  
 40 MR. REIFENSTUHL: Well, all I can say  
 41 is that it got under someone's skin because it had to  
 42 convince however many people were on the Wrangell  
 43 Advisory to get this through. So a majority vote. I  
 44 guess they believed the rumor.  
 45  
 46 I would agree this is an enforcement  
 47 issue and not a conservation issue.  
 48  
 49 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you. Any other  
 50

## Page 280

1 comments or questions for Mr. Koller.  
 2  
 3 Steve.  
 4  
 5 MR. REIFENSTUHL: I'm sorry. If true,  
 6 it's an enforcement issue. It may not even be true, so  
 7 I should qualify that.  
 8  
 9 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you. Any other  
 10 comments or questions.  
 11  
 12 (No comments)  
 13  
 14 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Justin.  
 15  
 16 MR. KOLLER: You're welcome.  
 17  
 18 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. Is there any  
 19 report of Board consultations with tribes or ANCSA  
 20 corporations?  
 21  
 22 (No comments)  
 23  
 24 CHAIRMAN BANGS: None. Agency comments  
 25 from Alaska Department of Fish and Game. Rich.  
 26  
 27 MR. LOWELL: Yes, Mr. Chairman. Rich  
 28 Lowell in Petersburg again. For the record, I am the  
 29 area wildlife biologist for the Central Panhandle Game  
 30 Management Units 1B and 3.  
 31  
 32 Deer populations have remained  
 33 chronically low throughout much of Unit 3 for decades  
 34 despite having had in place the most restrictive  
 35 hunting seasons and bag limits in the state. The  
 36 reasons Unit 3 deer population has remained low likely  
 37 include a combination of factors and in no particular  
 38 order.  
 39  
 40 They include periodic deep snow  
 41 winters, predation by wolves and bears, negative  
 42 effects of timber harvest on deer habitat capability,  
 43 increasing road densities and improved hunter access,  
 44 hunter harvest itself and possibly inter-specific  
 45 competition between deer and a rapidly increasing moose  
 46 population.  
 47  
 48 Under Alaska's intensive management law  
 49 ADF&G's management objective is to maintain a deer  
 50

## Page 282

1 concerns by many people that the Federal Designated  
 2 Hunter Program is being abused for trophy hunting  
 3 purposes is to similarly require antler destruction for  
 4 deer taken under the Federal designated hunter  
 5 provision.  
 6  
 7 With such limited resources, allowing  
 8 some individuals to harvest deer for an unlimited  
 9 number of beneficiaries reduces the availability for  
 10 other subsistence hunters who actually take to the  
 11 field in search of deer to feed their own family, thus  
 12 creating what many perceive to be an inequitable  
 13 distribution of a limited deer resource.  
 14  
 15 As a result, there's growing discontent  
 16 among the residents of Wrangell and Petersburg  
 17 regarding the unrestricted nature of the Federal  
 18 designated hunter provision, as is indicated by this  
 19 proposal from the Wrangell Fish and Game Advisory  
 20 Committee, which represents a Federally qualified  
 21 community.  
 22  
 23 The Department is neutral on providing  
 24 opportunity for Federal designated hunters to harvest  
 25 game on behalf beneficiaries to meet subsistence needs.  
 26 As written, the proposal is not likely to significantly  
 27 affect the total deer harvest as it would only affect a  
 28 very small number of hunters that harvest deer for more  
 29 than five recipients.  
 30  
 31 However, further reducing the number of  
 32 beneficiaries a designated hunter may harvest deer for  
 33 might help to reduce harvest pressure on low density  
 34 deer populations while allowing for a more equitable  
 35 distribution of a limited deer resource among  
 36 subsistence hunters who actually take to the field in  
 37 Units 1B and 3.  
 38  
 39 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.  
 40  
 41 That concludes my presentation.  
 42  
 43 I'll be happy to address any questions  
 44 the Council may have.  
 45  
 46 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Rich. Are  
 47 there any questions for Rich from the Council.  
 48  
 49 (No comments)  
 50

## Page 281

1 population in Unit 3 capable of sustaining an annual  
 2 harvest of at least 900 deer, a target that has not  
 3 been achieved in over 10 years. To aid recovery of the  
 4 deer population ADF&G manages deer in portions of Unit  
 5 3 under very restrictive seasons and bag limits.  
 6 Mitkof Island, Woevodski Island, Butterworth Island and  
 7 the Lindenberg Peninsula on Kupreanof Island are  
 8 managed under a two-week one buck season.  
 9  
 10 The goal of this conservative harvest  
 11 strategy is to help rebuild the population by limiting  
 12 human-caused mortality while still offering some  
 13 harvest opportunity. The Department recognizes the  
 14 potential hardship short seasons and restrictive bag  
 15 limits placed on hunters hoping to harvest deer for  
 16 subsistence purposes, particularly those unable to hunt  
 17 for themselves due to age or physical disability or  
 18 those with limited opportunity to hunt for themselves  
 19 due to employment or other obligations.  
 20  
 21 Allowing Federal designated hunters to  
 22 harvest deer for an unlimited number of beneficiaries  
 23 reduces the effectiveness of individual bag limits as a  
 24 means of limiting harvest. The only other way the  
 25 department can limit the deer harvest to facilitate  
 26 growth of the population is to restrict seasonally.  
 27 After all, irrespective of how many Federal designated  
 28 hunter tags a hunter has in his or her pocket, they can  
 29 only harvest so many deer in a limited amount of time.  
 30  
 31 While we recognize the primary intent  
 32 of the Federal designated hunter provision, it should  
 33 also be recognized that the greater harvest enabled by  
 34 this provision has the potential to inhibit recovery of  
 35 deer populations in Unit 3, which appear unable to  
 36 support high levels of harvest.  
 37  
 38 The State proxy system requires antler  
 39 destruction for both the proxies and the beneficiary  
 40 deer to deter use of the program as a means of  
 41 extending trophy hunting opportunity. In fact, because  
 42 of the antler destruction requirement in the State  
 43 proxy system many people shy away from the State proxy  
 44 system in favor of the Federal designated hunter  
 45 provision, which has no trophy destruction requirement.  
 46  
 47 In addition to limiting the number of  
 48 beneficiaries under the Federal designated hunter  
 49 provision, another change that could help address  
 50

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1 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Seeing none. Thank  
 2 you again. Is there any Federal agency comments or  
 3 tribal entities. Ms. Perry.  
 4  
 5 MS. PERRY: None received, Mr. Chair.  
 6  
 7 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Any other Regional  
 8 Councils, Fish and Game Advisory Committees.  
 9  
 10 MS. PERRY: None received, Mr. Chair.  
 11  
 12 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Subsistence Resource  
 13 Commissions. Is there any written public comments.  
 14  
 15 MS. PERRY: Yes, Mr. Chair. Two  
 16 written comments were received on Wildlife Proposal 18-  
 17 09. One comment was received from Curtis Donald Thomas  
 18 of Ketchikan addressing all Southeast proposals. Key  
 19 viewpoints were that attempts were being made to fix a  
 20 problem that does not exist and he expressed concerns  
 21 regarding new classes of citizens with special hunting  
 22 rights being created. He also expressed concern about  
 23 residency criteria and the ability of some Alaskans to  
 24 harvest 20 halibut a day.  
 25  
 26 Another comment was received in support  
 27 from Max Worhatch, chairman of the Petersburg Advisory  
 28 Committee. Viewpoints included a concern that some  
 29 game management units with short seasons and small bag  
 30 limits set by the State to conserve and manage a  
 31 sustainable herd are subject to an unrestrained  
 32 excessively liberal Federal Designated Hunter Program.  
 33  
 34 Although he supports this proposal, he  
 35 feels it is too liberal and should be further reduced  
 36 still in Game Units 3 and 1B due to the proximity of  
 37 Wrangell and Petersburg. Also mentioned the proposals  
 38 call for accurate report and enforcement and commented  
 39 that a liberal, all-inclusive program like this with  
 40 little enforcement and follow up will naturally end up  
 41 getting abused.  
 42  
 43 That concludes the comments for WP18-09  
 44 submitted by the public.  
 45  
 46 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you. Is there  
 47 any public testimony from anyone in the room.  
 48  
 49 (No comments)  
 50



## Page 284

1 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Any testimony from  
2 anybody on the phone.  
3  
4 (No comments)  
5  
6 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Hearing none. We'll  
7 move on to the wish of the Council.  
8  
9 Mr. Hernandez.  
10  
11 MR. HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Mr.  
12 Chairman. I'll move to adopt Wildlife Proposal 18-09.  
13  
14 MS. NEEDHAM: Second.  
15  
16 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Mr. Hernandez moved to  
17 adopt and Ms. Needham second.  
18  
19 Discussion.  
20  
21 Mr. Yeager.  
22  
23 MR. YEAGER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. For  
24 the record, this proposal was drafted out of the  
25 Wrangell AC by members that have witnessed some of the  
26 abuse, which they felt was coming from the Federal  
27 Designated Hunter program. These instances were  
28 witnessed by members of the AC and one particular  
29 family in Wrangell has been touting about their ability  
30 to harvest over 100 deer in the season.  
31  
32 Members of the AC also witnessed a boat  
33 coming in with up to -- I think it was around 12 to 14  
34 deer in the boat. It was tied to a dock and the same  
35 people bringing that vessel in got in another boat and  
36 headed back over to hunt more deer, leaving that boat  
37 unattended with deer hanging in it. Also members of  
38 our AC have found pretty much whole carcasses inside  
39 dumpsters in our harbor where very little if any meat  
40 was salvaged off of the deer themselves.  
41  
42 Also just a little bit of background  
43 and I would like it stated that this is why this was  
44 generated and why it came from the Wrangell AC.  
45  
46 Thank you.  
47  
48 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, John. Was  
49 there any enforcement involvement or no one.....  
50

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1 MR. YEAGER: At the time, and I'm not  
2 100 percent certain of this, but I think we were in  
3 between troopers. I believe our current trooper at  
4 that time had already left and we were without a  
5 trooper at that time.  
6  
7 We did not have a Forest Service LEO  
8 either.  
9  
10 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you. So it  
11 definitely sounds like an enforcement problem more than  
12 anything. Any other comments or questions.  
13  
14 Don.  
15  
16 MR. HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Mr.  
17 Chairman. I'm tending towards supporting this  
18 proposal. In the past we've had proposals on  
19 designated hunting come before us. I've been opposed  
20 to all of those proposals. I believe it dealt with  
21 drastically curtailing designated hunting and doing  
22 away with designated hunting.  
23  
24 At this point the proposals keep  
25 coming, we keep hearing the stories of abuse, which  
26 isn't necessarily what's driving my decision to support  
27 this, but I see this as this most recent proposal as  
28 actually being something that is a reasonable  
29 limitation to be placed on the designated hunter  
30 opportunity. In this area, Unit 3 in particular, there  
31 has been an ongoing conservation concern with the deer  
32 population. It is a very limited hunting opportunity  
33 much less than we see in other units.  
34  
35 I think the situation with the  
36 designated hunter opposition is more of a situation of  
37 competition and we've dealt with a proposal at the  
38 beginning of the meeting in Unit 2, which is  
39 essentially dealing with competition between  
40 subsistence and non-subsistence users.  
41  
42 In this case it's competition within  
43 the subsistence community, but it's kind of a  
44 competition between those that have a limited ability  
45 to harvest and these shortened seasons with small bag  
46 limits against their own neighbors that have the  
47 wherewithal to go out and hunt almost continuously and  
48 take larger numbers of deer.  
49  
50

## Page 286

1 Even though those deer are going to  
2 hopefully, maybe not in all cases, people who can  
3 utilize that deer, it still kind of creates a situation  
4 where if you're having fewer people take more deer out  
5 of a limited resource, it just kind of leaves less  
6 available for other people that want to harvest. If  
7 they perceive that as being unfair, then we're going to  
8 continue to get these proposals presented to us.  
9  
10 At this point I think this one is  
11 reasonable enough by setting a limit of five  
12 recipients, which I think is generous enough to take  
13 care of people that need deer that aren't able to go  
14 out and harvest on their own. All factors considered,  
15 I think I'm going to support this proposal.  
16  
17 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Don. Any  
18 other comments.  
19  
20 Steve.  
21  
22 MR. REIFENSTUHL: Looking at Table 1,  
23 so permits used, I assume that means designated hunter  
24 permits used, 51 in '16, 55. Then they have taken 137  
25 deer, those 51 permits, and then the year before 55  
26 permits and 101 deer. So for '16 that's 2.5 deer and  
27 then the year before it was two deer per permit  
28 average.  
29  
30 If I'm reading this wrong or doing my  
31 math wrong, please somebody correct me. So it doesn't  
32 look like whoever these hunters are taking 100 deer it  
33 doesn't seem to be reflected in the table. However,  
34 being able to hunt for five permits -- I'm a designated  
35 hunter. I do it every year. I don't do it for five  
36 people, but I think it is a great program and love to  
37 share deer.  
38  
39 So this five doesn't seem to limit what  
40 we're seeing on that table, so it wouldn't affect -- I  
41 mean I'm not sure how many people it's really going to  
42 affect. Anecdotally it's going to affect some people  
43 according to what we hear, but the table doesn't seem  
44 like it's going to affect any.  
45  
46 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Steve. I  
47 think that anecdotal would happen anyway regardless of  
48 whether we adopt this because it sounds like it was an  
49 illegal harvest and they're going to do that regardless  
50

## Page 287

1 of how many they're legally able to get permits for.  
2 So I'm not sure if this is going to do any good either  
3 way. Like you say, it's not reflected in the table  
4 that this is going to really affect anyone if we reduce  
5 the number of permits and the illegal activity could  
6 still go on.  
7  
8 Any other comments.  
9  
10 Steve.  
11  
12 MR. REIFENSTUHL: Well, I'd only say  
13 one other thing. People that don't proxy hunt there's  
14 illegal activities there. I mean if we're going to shut  
15 things down because one or two or a handful of people  
16 do illegal activities, we wouldn't be issuing permits  
17 for anything.  
18  
19 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you.  
20  
21 Mr. Schroeder.  
22  
23 MR. SCHROEDER: I'm overall a little  
24 bit quiet because I'd really like to defer to someone  
25 from the community who has heard about problems. On  
26 the other hand, I'll note that I consider the  
27 Designated Hunter Program along with the ceremonial use  
28 permits that Federal program established to be really,  
29 really good moves.  
30  
31 I had the opportunity to do hunter  
32 surveys when I was working on subsistence issues.  
33 Before we had designated hunter program we got really  
34 lousy reporting because in many communities in  
35 Southeast there were community hunters. These would be  
36 people who'd be both really skilled at hunting and  
37 they'd be supplying a lot of people with deer. So that  
38 was a community pattern and it seemed like a really  
39 long-lasting one.  
40  
41 The subsistence data overall for  
42 communities showed that there'd be high-harvesting  
43 households that really contributed a major amount of  
44 the food that a community would take. So there were  
45 two things there. One was the designated hunter  
46 program recognized existing cultural patterns and then  
47 it also kind of brought these hunters in from the cold  
48 because otherwise before that program existed someone  
49 who got 15 or 20 deer was never filling out reports to  
50

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1 Fish and Game saying that they got 15 deer when the  
2 limit was four.  
3  
4 So I think we also improved our general  
5 compliance and we made it possible for people to do  
6 things.  
7  
8 I guess without hearing more  
9 justification I'm not inclined to support this  
10 proposal.  
11  
12 Thank you.  
13  
14 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr.  
15 Schroeder. Any other comments.  
16  
17 Patty.  
18  
19 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
20 The Unit 3 portion of it I definitely would not support  
21 because that includes the Kake area. In Native  
22 villages you always have hunters that are harvesting  
23 for other families and that harvest can be significant.  
24 Maybe not exceed the two harvest allowable.  
25  
26 If there's an enforcement issue, then  
27 the Wrangell Fish and Game Advisory Committee has seen  
28 it themselves, then I think they should be documenting  
29 it and turning it in to enforcement regardless of  
30 whether you have a State Trooper in your community or  
31 not.  
32  
33 In my community that's what we're  
34 doing. We're getting on the phone and we're calling up  
35 State Troopers. It doesn't mean anything is going to  
36 come of it, but at least we're doing something to bring  
37 attention to it. I'm not saying that Wrangell doesn't  
38 do that. At some point in time it's either a  
39 management decision or it's an enforcement action. To  
40 me it's an enforcement action.  
41  
42 Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
43  
44 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Patty. I  
45 would agree.  
46  
47 Mr. Sensmeier.  
48  
49 MR. SENSMEIER: Thank you, Mr.  
50

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1 With the way that this analysis looks  
2 and the numbers aren't there, I have a hard time  
3 believing that they were legit and they were obtaining  
4 the permits, so it was illegal. Like I say, I think  
5 they would probably do that anyway.  
6  
7 So I'm not in favor of restricting  
8 designated hunters, but I am in favor of enforcing the  
9 regulations and documenting illegal activity and  
10 reporting it. I would think that the town of Wrangell  
11 there would be some peer pressure on those people that  
12 you'd think would help and stop that kind of activity.  
13 I know if somebody did that in Petersburg I think there  
14 would be some scrutiny and some pressure put on by the  
15 local citizens.  
16  
17 So I'm not sure what to believe, but I  
18 think that abuse will happen regardless of what we do  
19 with this proposal.  
20  
21 Mike.  
22  
23 MR. DOUVILLE: Well, the numbers alone  
24 it does not seem to be a conservation concern. I  
25 didn't hear anybody say that. The data here is  
26 supported by the analysis. The recommendation would be  
27 detrimental to subsistence users that do use the system  
28 properly. I think if it passed it would unnecessarily  
29 restrict them. As far as other users, I don't think it  
30 would have any effect.  
31  
32 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mike.  
33  
34 Anyone else.  
35  
36 (No comments)  
37  
38 MS. NEEDHAM: Question.  
39  
40 CHAIRMAN BANGS: The question has been  
41 called for by Member Needham.  
42  
43 Better do a roll call, please, Mr.  
44 Secretary.  
45  
46 MR. KITKA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.  
47  
48 Robert Schroeder.  
49  
50

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1 Chairman. I'm in agreement with Patty and Bob. This  
2 is real important. In the community of Yakutat you go  
3 out and you get a moose or you get deer and you share  
4 it with the elders and with those that are not able to  
5 go out and with single parents and with the senior  
6 lunch program and things like that. I don't see very  
7 many people nowadays that don't have a phone in their  
8 hand. If you look down and there's a boat with 14 deer  
9 and they're jumping in another boat to go get some  
10 more, I would think that you would take a picture of  
11 that and it would be an enforcement issue.  
12  
13 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Ray.  
14  
15 Donald.  
16  
17 MR. HERNANDEZ: In regards to the  
18 enforcement issue I guess the impression I'm getting is  
19 that these people were not violating, that they were  
20 essentially within the law by using the designated  
21 hunter permits in their possession to be able to take  
22 this many deer and it was just kind of offensive to  
23 people that they were able to take so many but yet not  
24 necessarily take proper care of them.  
25  
26 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Don.  
27  
28 Mike.  
29  
30 MR. DOUVILLE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
31 But the proponent says that one person is taking  
32 upwards of 40 to 50, so you're not seeing it in the  
33 system anywhere, so you know they're doing it illegal.  
34 They're not using the system.  
35  
36 So that's something to consider.  
37  
38 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Yes. I think that the  
39 intent of this program is very important to communities  
40 such as Patty referred to, Kake and different villages,  
41 that really do rely on village hunters. I think I  
42 would not want to put any restrictions.  
43  
44 I thought of different ways we could  
45 have access to maybe a different permit system for  
46 those communities that would, if we were to adopt  
47 something like this, that they could get around that if  
48 they were truly known as the village hunters and then  
49 get a permit or something from the Forest Service.  
50

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1 MR. SCHROEDER: I don't support. Nay.  
2  
3 MR. KITKA: Albert Howard.  
4  
5 MR. HOWARD: No.  
6  
7 MR. KITKA: Donald Hernandez.  
8  
9 MR. HERNANDEZ: Yes.  
10  
11 MR. KITKA: Raymond Sensmeier.  
12  
13 MR. SENSMEIER: No.  
14  
15 MR. KITKA: John Yeager.  
16  
17 MR. YEAGER: Yes.  
18  
19 MR. KITKA: Michael Bangs.  
20  
21 CHAIRMAN BANGS: No.  
22  
23 MR. KITKA: Cathy Needham.  
24  
25 MS. NEEDHAM: No.  
26  
27 MR. KITKA: Steve Reifensstuhl.  
28  
29 MR. REIFENSTUHL: No.  
30  
31 MR. KITKA: Patricia Phillips.  
32  
33 MS. PHILLIPS: No.  
34  
35 MR. KITKA: Michael Douville.  
36  
37 MR. DOUVILLE: No.  
38  
39 MR. KITKA: Harvey Kitka votes no. If  
40 failed 10 to 1.  
41  
42 MS. NEEDHAM: Two.  
43  
44 MR. KITKA: 10 to 2. 9 to 2.  
45  
46 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Math has always been  
47 our problem.  
48  
49 MR. SCHROEDER: Mr. Chairman.  
50

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1 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Mr. Schroeder.  
 2  
 3 MR. SCHROEDER: Mr. Chairman. I'd just  
 4 like the Council to acknowledge Harold Martin, who has  
 5 been sitting in our meeting on and off yesterday and  
 6 today. Harold was a former member of the Council quite  
 7 a few years ago and he's spent many, many years working  
 8 on the subsistence issue with Tlingit-Haida and with  
 9 the Organized Village of Kake and has been responsible  
 10 for many cooperative data gathering projects. So I'd  
 11 just like to welcome you on behalf of the Council,  
 12 Harold.  
 13  
 14 MR. MARTIN: Thank you.  
 15  
 16 MR. SCHROEDER: And Harold is also a  
 17 T'akdeintaan brother of mine. Thank you.  
 18  
 19 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Mr.  
 20 Schroeder.  
 21  
 22 Mr. Sensmeier.  
 23  
 24 MR. SENSMEIER: Yes, I'd just like to  
 25 acknowledge Harold as well. I had the honor and  
 26 privilege of serving with him on the University of  
 27 Alaska, Alaska Native Science Commission and with the  
 28 Alaska Native Harbor Seal for years. He finally  
 29 retired from that board and we hired him as a  
 30 consultant. We wouldn't let him get away. It's a real  
 31 honor to have him present.  
 32  
 33 Thank you.  
 34  
 35 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Ray.  
 36  
 37 Mr. Kitka.  
 38  
 39 MR. KITKA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'd  
 40 like to acknowledge Harold too. I'm not too sure  
 41 whether it turned out good for me or not because I sit  
 42 in his place. I was appointed after he retired. But,  
 43 Harold, I had dealings with him and worked with him a  
 44 lot of times. Him and I were both part of the Halibut  
 45 Subsistence which is being brought up on this thing  
 46 every now and then. He got the first ticket for  
 47 halibut subsistence, so he's number one in our books.  
 48  
 49 Thank you.  
 50

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1 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Harvey.  
 2 Okay. The next proposal is WP18-10, modifying seasons  
 3 for moose in Unit 5A the east side of Dangerous River.  
 4 Terry.  
 5  
 6 MR. SUMINSKI: Good afternoon, Mr.  
 7 Chairman. Proposal WP18-10, requests that the Federal  
 8 season for moose in Unit 5A, except Nunatak Bench east  
 9 of the Dangerous River, be open from  
 10 September 1 to November 15, with Federal public lands  
 11 closed to the harvest of moose except by residents of  
 12 Unit 5A from September 1 through September 14. This  
 13 was submitted by the Yakutat Fish and Game Advisory  
 14 Committee. Susan Oehlert is the analyst on this  
 15 proposal.  
 16  
 17 Thank you.  
 18  
 19 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Are you online, Susan?  
 20  
 21 (No response)  
 22  
 23 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Terry.  
 24  
 25 MR. SUMINSKI: Mr. Chairman. I think  
 26 it would be best if I can get Susan. Maybe we could go  
 27 to the next proposal because she really has a lot of  
 28 local knowledge about how this proposal was developed  
 29 and how she worked with the community on it.  
 30  
 31 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Patty.  
 32  
 33 MS. PHILLIPS: Can we take a five-  
 34 minute at ease?  
 35  
 36 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Sure. That's a good  
 37 idea. Do you think you could give her a call and get  
 38 in touch with her?  
 39  
 40 MR. SUMINSKI: Sure. Thank you.  
 41  
 42 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay, great. Thanks.  
 43  
 44 (Off record)  
 45  
 46 (On record)  
 47  
 48 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Okay. Terry, would  
 49 you like to start over.  
 50

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1 MR. SUMINSKI: Sure, Mr. Chairman.  
 2 Terry Suminski with the Forest Service. Proposal  
 3 WP18-10, requests that the Federal season for moose in  
 4 Unit 5A, except Nunatak Bench east of the Dangerous  
 5 River, be open from September 1 to November 15, with  
 6 Federal public lands closed to the harvest of moose  
 7 except by residents of Unit 5A from September 1 through  
 8 September 14. This was submitted by the Yakutat Fish  
 9 and Game Advisory Committee. Susan Oehlert is on the  
 10 phone as the analyst.  
 11  
 12 MS. OEHLERS: Good afternoon again.  
 13 Can you hear me okay this time?  
 14  
 15 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Yeah, loud and clear.  
 16  
 17 MS. OEHLERS: Okay. Sorry about that.  
 18 I'm not sure what happened there. Good afternoon, Mr.  
 19 Chair. Council Members. This is Susan Oehlert with  
 20 the Forest Service in Yakutat. Terry has already read  
 21 the proposal twice. I will not re-read that for the  
 22 record.  
 23  
 24 The proposal starts with the executive  
 25 summary on Page 223 and the analysis starts on Page  
 26 225. This proposal, as stated, was submitted by the  
 27 Fish and Game Advisory Committee with the rationale  
 28 that opening up the east side of the Dangerous  
 29 River earlier, access will be improved for subsistence  
 30 users, meaning longer days, potentially better weather  
 31 conditions, and greater availability of local air taxi,  
 32 which would allow additional opportunities and  
 33 potentially reduce the hunting pressure during the  
 34 opening days of the subsistence season on the west  
 35 side.  
 36  
 37 Implementation of this request would  
 38 effectively open the Federal season for moose in a  
 39 portion of Unit 5A five weeks earlier than the existing  
 40 regulation. The proponent intends to submit a parallel  
 41 proposal to the Alaska Board of Game requesting that  
 42 the State season open on September 8 on the east side  
 43 of the Dangerous River.  
 44  
 45 So I'm just going to give a little  
 46 brief background on population and harvest and then  
 47 I'll move into the conclusion and the justification,  
 48 which will include the effects of the proposal.  
 49  
 50

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1 Again, real briefly, currently the  
 2 moose population in Unit 5A appears to be healthy.  
 3 We've seen improved bull/cow ratios in recent years as  
 4 well as healthy recruitment and this is all likely as a  
 5 result of recent mild winters throughout Southeast  
 6 Alaska.  
 7  
 8 Regarding harvest as shown in Table 2,  
 9 from 2012 to 2016 an average of 15 moose were harvested  
 10 annually east of the Dangerous River and 27 west of the  
 11 Dangerous River, meeting or exceeding the quota of 25  
 12 on the west side and resulting in early season  
 13 closures, but not reaching the quota of 30 moose on the  
 14 east side. During that same time period 2012 to 2016  
 15 subsistence users accounted for an average of 96  
 16 percent of the harvest west of the Dangerous River and  
 17 52 percent east of the Dangerous River.  
 18  
 19 The OSM preliminary conclusion is to  
 20 support this proposal with the following justification:  
 21 Currently, the area in Unit 5A west of the Dangerous  
 22 River receives heavy hunting pressure during the first  
 23 few days of the subsistence season, resulting in a  
 24 rapid harvest and multiple animals taken out of  
 25 localized areas. The area east of the Dangerous River  
 26 is less accessible than the west side, including  
 27 minimal to no local air taxi service after September,  
 28 and receives less hunting pressure.  
 29  
 30 Opening the Federal season on the east  
 31 side of the Dangerous River earlier will improve  
 32 access, allowing additional  
 33 opportunities for subsistence users and potentially  
 34 reducing the hunting pressure, or at least lengthening  
 35 the season, west of the Dangerous River.  
 36  
 37 Since the harvest is managed on a quota  
 38 which is set annually, there would be minimal effects  
 39 to the overall moose population. A season opening in  
 40 September is consistent with other seasons in  
 41 Southcentral Alaska. Given limited access, a currently  
 42 healthy moose population, and a limited quota, effects  
 43 to reproduction are expected to be minimal.  
 44 Consequently, there are not expected to be any  
 45 conservation concerns as a result of adoption of the  
 46 proposal.  
 47  
 48 As I stated, the proponent intends to  
 49 submit a parallel proposal to the State Board of Game,  
 50

35 (Pages 292 to 295)

## Page 296

1 requesting that the State  
 2 season open on September 8 on the east side of the  
 3 Dangerous River. Consequently, if both proposals are  
 4 passed, there would be no negative impacts to State  
 5 users and it would also provide them additional  
 6 opportunities, including the availability of local air  
 7 taxi service.  
 8  
 9 That concludes my presentation and I  
 10 welcome any questions or comments.  
 11  
 12 Thank you.  
 13  
 14 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Ms.  
 15 Oehlers. Any questions from the Council.  
 16  
 17 Ray.  
 18  
 19 MR. SENSMEIER: Thank you, Mr.  
 20 Chairman. There is a concern locally as to a five-week  
 21 earlier opening. That area is only accessible by  
 22 airplane. Locally, it's cost prohibitive to fly down  
 23 there. If this was implemented, the last part of the  
 24 paragraph reads: If, however, this proposal is passed  
 25 and a parallel extension is not implemented under State  
 26 regulations, subsistence users will enjoy an earlier  
 27 season opening whereas the State season will remain the  
 28 same; consequently, fewer moose may be available to  
 29 State users.  
 30  
 31 You're looking at a reduction. I know  
 32 the guides would benefit from this because they have  
 33 airplanes and able to take people into that area five  
 34 weeks earlier than normal. If they did not institute a  
 35 parallel agreement for the State, that could reduce the  
 36 number of aircraft during that time period.  
 37  
 38 MS. OEHLERS: I'm not sure if there's a  
 39 question there. I agree with the statements. Sorry.  
 40 Through the Chair, Mr. Sensmeier. So, yeah, this would  
 41 be implemented first and then it would go through the  
 42 State Board of Game for the State season.  
 43  
 44 I don't know if that helps explain, but  
 45 I think what you're saying is correct.  
 46  
 47 MR. SENSMEIER: And then that would  
 48 leave time for the local fish and game advisory to  
 49 submit a proposal pertaining to the State and season,  
 50

## Page 298

1 MR. SENSMEIER: Deer season opens  
 2 tomorrow. Okay. I wanted to present those concerns  
 3 that have been reiterated to me in the last few days.  
 4 So thank you.  
 5  
 6 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Ray. We can  
 7 discuss that in deliberations as well. Any other  
 8 questions.  
 9  
 10 Patty.  
 11  
 12 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Chairman  
 13 Bangs. Ms. Oehlers, is there a potential of taking all  
 14 the harvest quota in the first two weeks of this  
 15 proposal?  
 16  
 17 MS. OEHLERS: Through the Chair. Ms.  
 18 Phillips. I would say that's a possibility. Generally  
 19 at this point the harvest has gone pretty slow on the  
 20 east side, but that's this time of year and with  
 21 limited access. You know, that would be something I  
 22 would have to guess at. I would say it's not out of  
 23 the question, but probably not very likely.  
 24  
 25 That's kind of difficult to predict how  
 26 many people would really take advantage of this  
 27 opportunity, but you're still looking at access is much  
 28 less than on the west side of the dangerous. You're  
 29 generally going to need a plane or a boat to access  
 30 most of the area. So I think it would provide more  
 31 opportunities. We would see increased use, but it's  
 32 also still the height of fishing season.  
 33  
 34 Back when the seasons were first set up  
 35 my understanding is that people were thinking most  
 36 people are still fishing through September, so most  
 37 people aren't going to really get out until early  
 38 October anyway. So I think that's still kind of a  
 39 situation, but I think there would be some people that  
 40 would take advantage of this earlier opportunity.  
 41  
 42 So kind of difficult to predict, but I  
 43 don't think it would necessarily get to that quota  
 44 within two weeks, but kind of hard to say.  
 45  
 46 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Susan.  
 47 Anyone else.  
 48  
 49 Patty, follow up.  
 50

## Page 297

1 is that right?  
 2  
 3 MS. OEHLERS: Yes. Through the Chair.  
 4 That's correct and that is their intent to submit a  
 5 similar proposal. So there would still be essentially  
 6 a two-week priority for subsistence users. It's just  
 7 everything would get shifted up earlier.  
 8  
 9 MR. SENSMEIER: And that the season  
 10 would open five weeks earlier. The prime bulls are the  
 11 ones that enter the rut first, so there's a concern  
 12 that there might be a trophy hunt because they're older  
 13 and prime.  
 14  
 15 Case in point, about 12 years ago or so  
 16 on the Manby side where the Wrangell-St. Elias Park and  
 17 Preserve are located our people go over there. It's  
 18 the only place in the Park where you can land an  
 19 airplane because of the treacherous waters between  
 20 Yakutat and the Manby shore and we're well aware of  
 21 that. I lost my son-in-law over there about four years  
 22 ago. He capsized. My aunt and uncle and another uncle  
 23 lost their lives there.  
 24  
 25 But going over there at that time there  
 26 were seven moose that were encountered with only the  
 27 antlers taken. They weren't even gutted or anything.  
 28 So that's a concern that this might occur on the  
 29 Yakutat Forelands because of the prime bull at that  
 30 time.  
 31  
 32 MS. OEHLERS: Through the Chair.  
 33 Council Member Sensmeier. I understand the concern. I  
 34 guess what I would say to that is there would be the  
 35 option for the Council to discuss if they wanted to  
 36 move the season up earlier but perhaps less than five  
 37 weeks. I mean that would be something that you could  
 38 entertain as well. I'm just throwing that out there  
 39 for consideration.  
 40  
 41 MR. SENSMEIER: Okay. As long as we're  
 42 able to take that up, that part of it, at the next fish  
 43 and game advisory. I've been getting phone calls. I  
 44 got two while I was here this morning. I admit one of  
 45 them was from my son wanting to know where the deer  
 46 call was.  
 47  
 48 (Laughter)  
 49  
 50

## Page 299

1 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
 2 Ms. Oehlers, on Page 233, that main paragraph says,  
 3 Moose in Yakutat have been observed congregating from  
 4 August to October, coinciding with the rutting season  
 5 and that the rutting bulls are more vulnerable to  
 6 harvest. So that's telling me that an earlier hunt on  
 7 the east of the Dangerous makes them more vulnerable to  
 8 harvest.  
 9  
 10 MS. OEHLERS: Through the Chair.  
 11 Council Member Phillips. I agree. That's a true  
 12 statement. So, yeah, we might see some higher harvest  
 13 rate, but again I think the effort -- there would be  
 14 some increased effort, but it's probably going to be  
 15 minimal. And I would point out that a number of  
 16 seasons -- you know, the next statements within the  
 17 analysis talks about it's a pretty common season  
 18 throughout Alaska. So this is kind of a standard  
 19 management practice.  
 20  
 21 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Susan.  
 22 Ray.  
 23  
 24 MR. SENSMEIER: Thank you, Patty.  
 25 That's what I alluded to a minute ago and that there's  
 26 a concern that those prime wolves with the large racks  
 27 would be targeted for trophy reasons especially when  
 28 people can afford to fly in and target those. I  
 29 mentioned what had happened in the past with seven  
 30 bulls found.  
 31  
 32 Also there are people down there that  
 33 oppose Harold Robbins. Bob Miller has an aircraft.  
 34 Robbins is a guide. Gary Gray is a guide. And they're  
 35 opposed to this I was told just before I left.  
 36  
 37 Thank you.  
 38  
 39 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Ray. Any  
 40 other questions for Ms. Oehlers.  
 41  
 42 Bob.  
 43  
 44 MR. SCHROEDER: Yes, Susan. This is  
 45 Bob Schroeder. I'm wondering -- I think you've had a  
 46 quota of 30 bulls for harvest east for some years, is  
 47 that correct?  
 48  
 49  
 50

## Page 300

1 MS. OEHLERS: Through the Chair. Mr.  
2 Schroeder. That's correct.  
3  
4 MR. SCHROEDER: At least in Table 2,  
5 really that quota hasn't been taken, at least from 2012  
6 to 2016 and probably not this year either. What does  
7 that do to the population structure of moose in this  
8 area. I'm not sure if Table 1 -- Easter Forelands, is  
9 that the same as the east of the Dangerous?  
10  
11 MS. OEHLERS: That's correct.  
12  
13 MR. SCHROEDER: So if you kind of look  
14 at Table 1, it looks like we've got a whole bunch of  
15 bulls in the east. Is there a surplus of bulls in the  
16 east or can you comment on the population structure and  
17 productivity?  
18  
19 MS. OEHLERS: Sure. Through the Chair.  
20 Mr. Schroeder. Yeah, that's a good question. Yeah, we  
21 have not reached the quota on the east side in recent  
22 years for most of the time that the season has been in  
23 effect. I think that, generally speaking, there is  
24 higher harvest on the west side, so we've seen a lower  
25 cow/bull ratio.  
26  
27 Mostly there's less effort on the east  
28 side. I think there are additional animals that could  
29 be taken. We set the quota, so that's kind of a safety  
30 measure. Maybe more animals would be harvested early  
31 on, but we would close the season if we get to that  
32 quota.  
33  
34 If you're talking about population  
35 structure, we don't have any hard data showing  
36 improvement from east or west of the Dangerous, but  
37 presumably there is some movement from the eastern  
38 forelands to the western forelands. I think currently  
39 the population would be able to withstand some  
40 additional hunting pressure. That quota is something  
41 that we set annually. Even if we extended the season  
42 if we got into situations, some hard winters that we  
43 thought we couldn't support a harvest of 30 bulls, we  
44 can change that quota. Again, we set that every year.  
45  
46 Does that answer your question?  
47  
48 MR. SCHROEDER: Yes. I won't get too  
49 much into the biology. We've discussed the Board of  
50

## Page 302

1 MS. SELL: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
2 Council Members. For the record, my name is Stephanie  
3 Sell. I'm the area wildlife management biologist for  
4 Northern Southeast Alaska. I manage GMU 1C, 1D and 5.  
5 I'm here with Ryan. You guys know him.  
6  
7 I think Susan covered a lot of the  
8 summary that we have as well. This proposal  
9 liberalizes the Federal moose hunting season on the  
10 east side of the Dangerous River in Unit 5A by adding  
11 an additional five weeks to the beginning of the  
12 season.  
13  
14 This hunt is managed under a joint  
15 State/Federal permit that was established in 2004.  
16 Currently hunting by non-Yakutat residents is  
17 prohibited on Federal lands between October 8th through  
18 the 21st. So essentially there's a little bit of  
19 confusion with State hunters seeing our season starts  
20 October 15th because all the lands generally up there  
21 are Federal lands that technically State season can't  
22 start until October 22nd.  
23  
24 In 2012 there were Sealaska lands known  
25 as the nine townships that were close to town and that  
26 previously dispersed the harvest a little bit. It was  
27 managed by the State and pushed some of the harvest  
28 away from town and off the road system.  
29  
30 However, in 2012 that reverted back to  
31 Federal management, which opened up additional hunting  
32 opportunity close to town for Yakutat residents under  
33 this Federal regulation and increased the harvest  
34 significantly as Ms. Oehlert mentioned.  
35  
36 This opened up really prime moose  
37 habitat. This is areas around Ten Mile Meadow, Situk  
38 area and it actually concentrated some of the harvest  
39 into those areas because the habitat is so good.  
40  
41 Federal regulations allowed designated  
42 hunters to hunt moose for multiple people and there are  
43 few efficient hunting parties who are able to take  
44 multiple moose which account for a majority of the  
45 quota on the west side of the Dangerous and we've heard  
46 some concerns from some people that some of those  
47 parties are getting all the moose in the quota and not  
48 allowing opportunity for other families.  
49  
50

## Page 301

1 Game schedule with respect to a wolf proposal that we  
2 just dealt with earlier and the Board of Game is  
3 meeting such that -- let's see if I've got it right  
4 now. The Board of Game is meeting January 19 and so  
5 the earliest possible effect for a Board of Game change  
6 would be the 2019 hunting season.  
7  
8 Did you note in the analysis if the  
9 Federal Board passed this proposal as written, this  
10 would essentially close the area east of the Dangerous  
11 for the 2018 season. Do you have any comment on that?  
12  
13 MS. OEHLERS: Through the Chair.  
14 Council Member Schroeder. I see what you're saying. If  
15 this were passed by the Subsistence Board, this would  
16 go into effect next season, but there would be -- if I  
17 understand it in the way you stated it, if that's  
18 correct, a similar change for the State would not go  
19 into effect until the previous year.  
20  
21 So you're right, there would be one  
22 year where the Federal season is moved up earlier  
23 without a concurrent change in the State. That doesn't  
24 necessarily mean it would preclude a State season. But  
25 you're right, there would be a lag.  
26  
27 Does that answer your question?  
28  
29 And I did not speak to that in the  
30 proposal, but that's a good observation.  
31  
32 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you. Any other  
33 questions for Ms. Oehlert.  
34  
35 (No comments)  
36  
37 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Seeing none. Thank  
38 you again, Ms. Oehlert and Mr. Suminski.  
39  
40 MR. SUMINSKI: Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
41  
42 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Is there any reports  
43 from consultations from tribes or ANCSA corporations?  
44  
45 (No comments)  
46  
47 CHAIRMAN BANGS: None. Agency comments  
48 from Alaska Department of Fish and Game.  
49  
50

## Page 303

1 Both the State and Federal Staff, Ms.  
2 Oehlert and myself, we try to attempt to closely  
3 monitor this population and the harvest to make sure it  
4 stays within the quota on the west side of the  
5 Dangerous, which has typically been between 25 bulls,  
6 but hunters often fail to report their harvest in a  
7 timely fashion, so it's very difficult for us to kind  
8 of track that in real time.  
9  
10 As an example, this season we increased  
11 our quota because the bull and cow ratios were really  
12 good to 30 on the west side of the Dangerous. We ended  
13 up closing the season when we knew about 23 and then we  
14 ended up with 35 to 36 moose harvested when we closed  
15 it the following day. So there was a lot of moose that  
16 we didn't know about at that time.  
17  
18 Reported harvest exceeded the annual  
19 quota in regulatory years 2014-2016 including this past  
20 season. Even though we try to manage the moose hunt  
21 as best we can, it usually closes within three to four  
22 days at the beginning of the Federal season, so we  
23 don't even get to a State season. We close it before  
24 it starts on the west side of the Dangerous.  
25  
26 During those same years the east side  
27 of the Dangerous River has remained open for the entire  
28 State and Federal season. So if it's underutilized and  
29 we're not meeting our quota on that side. Regulatory  
30 years 2012-2016 we harvested an average of 44 bulls in  
31 Unit 5A, but only 15 of those bulls actually come from  
32 the east side of the Dangerous, so that kind of gives  
33 you an idea that we're underutilizing opportunity on  
34 that side.  
35  
36 The Department does not identify any  
37 conservation concerns for moose in Unit 5A. Aerial  
38 surveys indicate that the moose population on the east  
39 side of the Dangerous is doing well. It has really  
40 good bull/cow ratios. The percentage of calves  
41 observed during surveys were similar in 2015 and '16,  
42 indicating positive recruitment.  
43  
44 Opening the hunting season on the east  
45 side of the Dangerous River will potentially disperse  
46 some of the harvest pressure away from some of the  
47 areas on the west side of the Dangerous that are easily  
48 assessable because they're located off the road system  
49 and potentially because those air charter services will  
50

## Page 304

1 be available.

2  
3 The Department supports this proposal  
4 to provide additional harvest opportunity with the  
5 understanding that a parallel proposal will be  
6 submitted to the Board of Game at a 2019 meeting.

7  
8 That's all I have and I'd be happy to  
9 answer any questions.

10  
11 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Are there any  
12 questions for Ms. Sell.

13  
14 (No comments)

15  
16 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Mr. Scott, would  
17 you like to add something.

18  
19 MR. SCOTT: Thank you, Vice Chair  
20 Needham. Not a question for Ms. Sell, but I guess to  
21 give you a little bit of perspective on this and I  
22 appreciate Mr. Sensmeier's input as well, very much so.

23  
24 The crowding on that area between -- on  
25 the west side of the Dangerous River back towards town,  
26 that has been a pretty constant rub for lots of people.  
27 The quota goes quickly as Stephanie alluded, but this  
28 proposal or some form of this type of proposal has been  
29 battered around for a long time. And I love talking  
30 about Yakutat moose by the way. One of my favorite  
31 places and one of my favorite species there.

32  
33 We've talk to the AC, all of which are  
34 Federally qualified hunters. They're looking for the  
35 potential to find some resolution, so I commend the AC  
36 for taking this step. Susan and Stephanie both did an  
37 extraordinary amount of work to get it to this point.

38  
39 It's an idea, frankly. It's an idea of  
40 trying to figure out a way to distribute the harvest.  
41 Not so much not to take away harvest from the west side  
42 but distribute the pressure between the east and the  
43 west side. It may or may not work. There's some  
44 concerns about the rut season and prime bulls being a  
45 target. That is a concern. As Susan mentioned, it's  
46 not unheard of to have moose season start in late  
47 August or the first of September.

48  
49 Southeast has always been a little bit

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1 off when you look at State moose seasons where the  
2 majority of our hunts occur during the rut to begin  
3 with. But we manage those hunts pretty closely and  
4 would intend to do the same thing with the Yakutat  
5 area.

6  
7 Again, this is an idea, an attempt to  
8 distribute the effort and the pressure. Realizing that  
9 there's going to be potentially -- it is very expensive  
10 to move around the forelands in an aircraft, but we're  
11 trying to provide that opportunity for all the user  
12 groups, starting with the Federal side and then  
13 potentially the State side later on.

14  
15 Thank you.

16  
17 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Thank you. Are  
18 there any Council questions for Alaska Department of  
19 Fish and Game.

20  
21 (No comments)

22  
23 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Thank you guys  
24 for your time. Are there any Federal agency comments.

25  
26 (No comments)

27  
28 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Are there any  
29 comments from tribal entities?

30  
31 (No comments)

32  
33 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Any there any  
34 other Regional Councils, Fish and Game Advisory  
35 Committee comments or Subsistence Resource Commissions.

36  
37 MS. PERRY: Vice Chair, we do have a  
38 comment from the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park  
39 Subsistence Resource Commission. They recently met in  
40 Copper Center, Alaska last week and the Commission had  
41 the following comment for this proposal.

42  
43 The Wrangell-St. Elias National Park  
44 Subsistence Resource Commission supports Wildlife  
45 Proposal 18-10. This change will provide an  
46 opportunity for local residents to harvest moose before  
47 the rut. Additionally, opening the season earlier will  
48 improve access. During September fishermen will be in  
49 the hunt area with their boats. The area is difficult

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1 to access by boat after October 1st due to fall storms.

2  
3 That concludes the comment from the  
4 Wrangell-St. Elias National Park Subsistence Resource  
5 Commission.

6  
7 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Are there any  
8 Council questions.

9  
10 (No comments)

11  
12 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Are there any  
13 written public comments?

14  
15 MS. PERRY: Yes, Ms. Vice Chair. On  
16 Page 240 the public comments begin for WP18-10. The  
17 summary is as follows: One comment was received from  
18 Curtis Donald Thomas of Ketchikan addressing all  
19 Southeast proposals. Key view points were that  
20 attempts were being made to fix a problem that does not  
21 exist and he expressed concerns regarding new classes  
22 of citizens with special hunting rights being created.  
23 Residency criteria and the ability of some Alaskans to  
24 harvest 20 halibut a day.

25  
26 That concludes the written public  
27 comments for WP18-10.

28  
29 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Thank you. Is  
30 there any public testimony from the room.

31  
32 MS. PERRY: Ms. Vice Chair. I realized  
33 that there was one comment submitted later than the  
34 other comments that went into the meeting book and I'd  
35 like to go ahead and take the opportunity to read that.

36  
37 This written comment was received from  
38 Geoff Widdows. He's a Yakutat resident. It was  
39 received on October 25th and he states, quote, I am  
40 writing to express my support for WP18-10 which  
41 requests to open up the moose season in Unit 5A east of  
42 the Dangerous River on September 1st.

43  
44 I support the rationale for this change  
45 as described in the proposal by the Yakutat Advisory  
46 Committee. Implementing this proposal would reduce the  
47 hunting pressure on the west side of the Dangerous  
48 River. A positive change for both moose and hunters  
49 alike.

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1 Since the harvest east of the Dangerous  
2 River has not approached the allowable quota in recent  
3 years, more as a result of decreased effort relative to  
4 the west side rather than a lack of available moose,  
5 there's capacity for additional harvest which could  
6 benefit subsistence users, end quote.

7  
8 That concludes the written comment  
9 received recently by Geoff Widdows and that is the last  
10 public comment that I have, Vice Chair. Thank you.

11  
12 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Thank you, Ms.  
13 Perry. Is there any other public testimony from folks  
14 in the room.

15  
16 (No comments)

17  
18 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Is there any  
19 public testimony from individuals online.

20  
21 (No comments)

22  
23 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Hearing none.

24  
25 What is the wish of the Council.

26  
27 MR. REIFENSTUHL: I would like to make  
28 a motion to adopt Wildlife Proposal 18-10.

29  
30 MR. BANGS: Second.

31  
32 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: It's been moved  
33 by Mr. Reifensstuhl to adopt the proposal with a second  
34 by Mr. Bangs. Council discussion. Mr. Sensmeier.

35  
36 MR. SENSMEIER: Thank you, Madame  
37 Chair. I currently sit on the Wrangell-St. Elias board  
38 and attended the meeting last week. I was somewhat  
39 surprised that the deer and the moose were taken up at  
40 that meeting. I thought it would be at this meeting.  
41 It wasn't until I returned and on Monday before  
42 yesterday attended the tribal senior lunch program,  
43 which just opened in October, and there were like 23  
44 people there plus two cooks. I announced what I was  
45 coming here for, this moose proposal, and that's when I  
46 heard the objections. There were like 14 males and 12  
47 females all 60-plus age, longtime residents of Yakutat.

48  
49 It would enable some users if they had

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1 the use of aircraft, which would cost thousands of  
2 dollars, especially if you did get a moose, to get it  
3 out and I don't see anyone locally benefitting from  
4 that. The fishing season this year went into October,  
5 so nobody is going to quit fishing to go moose hunting.  
6 Being that it is only accessible by air, it would not  
7 really benefit any of the local users.

8 I don't always agree with Harold  
9 Robbins, but this time I do. He's opposed to opening  
10 it. And Bob Miller, a pilot, and Gary Gray is also a  
11 bear guide down there. As it stands now, I cannot  
12 support this.

13 Thank you.

14  
15  
16  
17 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr.  
18 Sensmeier. Are there any other discussion from other  
19 Council Members.

20 Ms. Phillips.

21  
22 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Vice Chair  
23 Needham. I will be voting no on this proposal. My  
24 reasons are slightly different though I do support Mr.  
25 Sensmeier's community perspective that he heard from  
26 his Yakutat residents, their concerns, that it wouldn't  
27 really address their -- well, it would give additional  
28 opportunity for Yakutat residents, but I think if you  
29 were fishing on a setnet site on one of the rivers and  
30 your season goes until October and you have to live the  
31 rest of the year on that fishing income, you're not  
32 going to stop fishing to hunt a moose.

33  
34 Also my area, Lisianski Inlet, has  
35 traditionally had setnet permits for the Yakutat area  
36 and still do have setnet permits that fish the Alek.  
37 They are rural residents of Alaska in Southeast Alaska  
38 and they have to wait until Yakutat has their hunt.  
39 They currently are getting moose now.

40  
41 So if that entire quota for the east of  
42 the Dangerous is caught, then they don't have that  
43 opportunity and yet they're Federally qualified rural  
44 residents. Maybe they don't have the C&T for the  
45 Yakutat area, but they're on that river. So I'm kind  
46 of looking out for them because it's been a traditional  
47 practice for -- I don't know.

48  
49  
50

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1 MR. SENSMEIER: Yes. With respect to  
2 what Patty said. Yeah, you do hang the moose. We all  
3 know now with climate change and global warming that  
4 the temperatures in September they're extremely high,  
5 up into the 80s and sometimes even to 90. My son came  
6 home with a moose last fall and we hung it in the  
7 smokehouse and that was in October because it had  
8 cooled down and hung it for 11 days. Early on in  
9 September I don't believe that you would be able to  
10 hang a moose that far and salvage very much of the  
11 meat.

12 Thank you.

13  
14  
15 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Mr. Schroeder.

16  
17 MR. SCHROEDER: I have one other  
18 comment and that is that the resource in the proposed  
19 area has not been fully utilized. We have a quota of 30  
20 moose and as the data shows approximately an average of  
21 15 moose have been taken and the quota has never been  
22 met. That's sort of a sign that if we want to provide  
23 subsistence opportunity that some change is warranted.  
24 So I'd support a change that would promote subsistence  
25 opportunity.

26  
27 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr.  
28 Schroeder.

29 Mr. Hernandez and then Ms. Phillips.

30  
31  
32 MR. HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Cathy. My  
33 initial thoughts on this proposal were that it was an  
34 excellent proposal to support. It was proposed by  
35 local subsistence users. It kind of solved a problem  
36 where moose were going unutilized and it also provided  
37 for an early season for the subsistence users which  
38 would be a priority use for subsistence, but now I'm  
39 hearing from some of the Council Members that they  
40 don't necessarily think that that's the way it would  
41 all come out in the end.

42  
43 I want a little more clarity here as to  
44 why that is and what I'm hearing essentially is that  
45 they don't believe that the local Yakutat residents  
46 would be the ones to benefit from this because they're  
47 still kind of engaged in fishing and not really hunting  
48 yet. And you believe that the increased availability  
49 would tend to more be taken by non-subsistence users.

50

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1 I've been in Pelican since '72 and  
2 there were people -- I mean Byron Mallott used to bring  
3 salmon from Dry Bay down to Pelican Cold Storage on a  
4 tender. So it's been going on for a long time. So I'm  
5 looking at a different perspective than the rest of you  
6 would be looking at. And then with the rutting bulls  
7 in early August to October, you have those bulls  
8 vulnerable to harvest early on when these other guys  
9 can't even get on them yet or harvesters don't want to  
10 take the time.

11 One thing that I do on harvesting deer  
12 in my area is I wait for the temperatures to chill down  
13 so that when I hang a deer it can age. I don't know if  
14 that's what they do with moose because I don't get  
15 moose, but I would want the temperatures to chill down  
16 before I go get a moose.

17  
18 So that's why I would vote no.

19 Thank you.

20  
21 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Thank you, Ms.  
22 Phillips. Other discussion by Council Members.

23 Mr. Schroeder.

24  
25 MR. SCHROEDER: This happens to be one  
26 area that I am familiar with because I've gone up there  
27 hunting a couple times. I want the Council to be aware  
28 of the sequencing problem of getting the Board of Game  
29 to line up with any new Federal proposal that we put  
30 forth particularly because the Board of Game cycle  
31 would not be able to act on this until taking effect in  
32 the 2019 season.

33  
34 So if we pass this with no provisos  
35 that would have a Federal subsistence season in east of  
36 the Dangerous from September 1 until November 15 with  
37 non-subsistence qualified hunters only able to hunt on  
38 the State season, which is October 8th. If that's our  
39 intention, we should just be aware of that.

40  
41 An alternative would be to suggest  
42 defer implementation.

43 Thank you.

44  
45 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Mr. Sensmeier.

46  
47  
48  
49  
50

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1 Is that kind of the gist of it here.

2  
3 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Mr. Sensmeier.

4  
5 MR. SENSMEIER: Yes, that's true. I  
6 don't know of any local users that would be able to  
7 spend the thousands of dollars it would take to hire an  
8 air taxi and in the event you did get a moose be able  
9 to haul that all out, which is an additional cost as  
10 well.

11 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Ms. Phillips,  
12 then Mr. Reifensstuhl.

13  
14 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you Vice Chair  
15 Needham. Well, maybe if we moved the date a little.  
16 Instead of this September 1st proposed date to  
17 September 20th and then the State season two weeks  
18 after that.

19  
20 My concern, Mr. Hernandez, isn't that.  
21 My concern is that Yakutat residents will get it all  
22 and those other rural residents who are not Yakutat  
23 residents won't get what they've customary and  
24 traditionally have harvested.

25 Thank you.

26  
27 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Thank you.

28 Mr. Reifensstuhl.

29  
30 MR. REIFENSTUHL: Yes. If Susan is  
31 still on, I'd like to know how many people are on the  
32 Yakutat Advisory. They had to be public hearings.  
33 That would be helpful to understand how many people  
34 were represented there.

35  
36 MS. OEHLERS: Sure, through the Chair.  
37 Council Member Reifensstuhl. I'm not sure the total  
38 numbers and I don't know if they have it at the tip of  
39 their fingers. I don't know if the State would have  
40 those numbers handy.

41  
42 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Does the State  
43 have those numbers potentially?

44  
45 MR. SCOTT: Chairman Needham, we don't  
46 have the exact numbers, but anywhere from seven, eight,  
47 nine individual around the AC.

48  
49  
50

39 (Pages 308 to 311)

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<p>1 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Thank you. Mr. 2 Sensmeier, can you answer that question. 3 4 MR. SENSMEIER: Yes. I called my son- 5 in-law last night and asked him the number and the 6 names of the people on it and they're upwards of 15 7 people on that Council according to him. I don't know a 8 lot of them personally, but I do know three or four 9 that are local. 10 11 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Mr. Reifensstuhl. 12 13 MR. REIFENSTUHL: We've heard a lot 14 about local support here in the past and this proposal 15 has evolved over months if not longer. So it seems to 16 have a lot of public support and they're Federally 17 qualified. So it seems like we should respect that as 18 we have in the past proposals. 19 20 So I think it sounds good. 21 22 I would be supportive of changing the 23 date and then moving this forward. 24 25 I have a meeting at 5:10. 26 27 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. 28 Reifensstuhl. 29 30 Mr. Bangs. 31 32 MR. BANGS: I agree with Patty that 33 maybe moving the dates and that would increase the 34 opportunity for subsistence users in the 5A area, but 35 wouldn't it make it so that the people that 36 traditionally take them after they're done fishing 37 would still have an opportunity. I think you're headed 38 down the right road, so I would be in favor of the 39 proposal if we did that. 40 41 Thank you. 42 43 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. 44 Bangs. Mr. Sensmeier. 45 46 MR. SENSMEIER: Yes. I'd like to thank 47 you, Patty. I'm in agreement with that as well. 48 49 Thank you. 50</p>	<p>1 non-subsistence users at the beginning of the season. 2 So I think we need to address that in our amendment. 3 4 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Mr. Schroeder. 5 6 MR. SCHROEDER: Perhaps we could simply 7 clarify that the person proposing the amendment wanted 8 September 20th to November 15th be the season and that 9 the closure of Federal public lands would be from 10 September 20th to 14 days after that. 11 12 Is that your intention, proposer? 13 14 MR. BANGS: Sure, that sounds right. 15 16 MR. SCHROEDER: So now we need somebody 17 who is good at math to figure out 14 days. 18 19 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Do we have the 20 concurrence from the second on that, Mr. Douville. You 21 seconded that amendment. Do you concur? 22 23 MR. DOUVILLE: Yeah, I'm good with 24 that. 25 26 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: All right. Ms. 27 Phillips. 28 29 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, RAC Members, 30 for your reconsideration of the opening date. If you 31 went with your current amendment, it would put it to 32 October 4th. I'm wondering if perhaps we should go to 33 September 16th and then a two week -- it's closed to 34 non-Federally qualified through September 30th and then 35 October 1 it would open to everyone to simplify it. 36 37 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Mr. Bangs. 38 39 MR. BANGS: I'll rescind my original 40 amendment if Mr. Douville will rescind his second and 41 then restate the amendment. 42 43 MR. DOUVILLE: Agreeable. 44 45 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Yes, Ms. 46 Phillips. 47 48 MS. PHILLIPS: Did you understand that, 49 Mr. Sensmeier? Are you all right with that? 50</p>
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<p>1 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Does anybody on 2 the Council wish to amend the proposal. Mr. Douville. 3 4 MR. DOUVILLE: Thank you. I'd have to 5 ask Mr. Sensmeier which dates would give the most 6 benefit to the most subsistence users. 7 8 That is my question for you. 9 10 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr. 11 Douville. 12 13 Mr. Sensmeier. 14 15 MR. SENSMEIER: Thank you, Madame 16 Chair. Mr. Douville. I believe the 20th would provide 17 ample time. I still don't think the local fishermen 18 and the local users would participate in that in that 19 it requires airplanes to access that area. There are 20 over 90 rivers, streams and tributaries in that area 21 which are not accessible by four-wheeler or walking. 22 It's an airplane only access. I'm comfortable with 23 that date. 24 25 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Mr. Bangs. 26 27 MR. BANGS: Thank you, Ms. Needham. I 28 move to amend the motion on the floor to change the 29 date from September 1 to September 20th. 30 31 MR. DOUVILLE: Second. 32 33 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: It's been moved 34 to change the motion on the floor from September 1 to 35 September 20th by Mr. Bangs and seconded by Mr. 36 Douville. 37 38 Discussion on the amendment. 39 40 Mr. Hernandez. 41 42 MR. HERNANDEZ: Thank you. That 43 amendment -- I think we have to also in the same 44 amendment address the early season for subsistence as 45 opposed to non-subsistence portion of that. If we 46 change one date, I think we should also change the 47 opening for the non-subsistence as well, which have to 48 address in this amendment also. Presently the way the 49 proposal is written they propose a 14-day closure to 50</p>	<p>1 MR. SENSMEIER: Yes. 2 3 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you. I move to 4 amend the Unit 5A except Nunatak Bench east of the 5 Dangerous River, one bull by joint State/Federal 6 registration permit only. From September 16th through 7 September 30th Federal public lands are closed to the 8 taking of moose except by residents of Unit 5A hunting 9 under these regulations. 10 11 MR. BANGS: Second. 12 13 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: It's been moved 14 and seconded to amend Wildlife Proposal WP18-10 to now 15 read Unit 5A except Nunatak Bench east of the Dangerous 16 River, one bull by joint State/Federal registration 17 permit only. From September 16th through September 18 30th Federal public lands are closed to the taking of 19 moose except by residents of Unit 5A. 20 21 Mr. Hernandez. 22 23 MR. HERNANDEZ: Excuse me. I don't 24 think that's quite right. It should be worded so that 25 the Federal season is open from September 16th to 26 November 15th and it's closed to the taking of non- 27 subsistence users from September 16th to the 30th. 28 29 MS. PHILLIPS: Okay. 30 31 MR. SCHROEDER: Can we call for the 32 question on the amendment. 33 34 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: The amendment as 35 Ms. Phillips stated it? 36 37 MR. SCHROEDER: Yes. 38 39 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Okay. The 40 question has been called for the amendment where the 41 dates were from September 16th through September 30th. 42 43 MR. SCHROEDER: I think we need to 44 clearly state the amendment one more time because we've 45 had a number of versions. 46 47 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Ms. Phillips, 48 can you clearly state the amendment, the motion for the 49 amendment. 50</p>



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1 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Vice Chair  
2 Needham. So the season will be September 15th through  
3 November 15th and 5A except Nunatak Bench east of the  
4 Dangerous River, one bull by joint State/Federal  
5 registration permit only. From September 16th through  
6 September 30th Federal public lands are closed to the  
7 taking of moose except by residents of Unit 5A hunting  
8 under these regulations.  
9  
10 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Currently  
11 there's an amendment on the floor that was stated by  
12 Ms. Phillips to change the dates from September 16th to  
13 September 30th and the question has been called on that  
14 amendment, which was previously an amendment that we  
15 put on the floor prior to Mr. Hernandez's  
16 recommendation to change that language to include the  
17 rest of the regulation. So supporting the amendment  
18 would not include the proposed Federal regulation that  
19 was on top previous to that and opposing that would  
20 then allow somebody to make a motion to amend the main  
21 proposal with clearer language to include what was  
22 forgotten.  
23  
24 Mr. Bangs.  
25  
26 MR. BANGS: To make this speed up a  
27 little bit, I think we should just, if we want to do  
28 that, let's just vote down what's called the question  
29 for and restate another amendment and carry on if  
30 that's okay with Ms. Phillips.  
31  
32 MS. PHILLIPS: Sure.  
33  
34 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: All right.  
35 Those in favor of the amendment signify by saying aye.  
36  
37 MS. PHILLIPS: Aye.  
38  
39 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Those opposed  
40 nay.  
41  
42 IN UNISON: Nay.  
43  
44 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: The nays have  
45 it. Is the wish of the Council to offer another  
46 amendment to the main motion.  
47  
48 Mr. Schroeder.  
49  
50

## Page 317

1 MR. SCHROEDER: I'll do a try this  
2 time. I wish to amend the main motion to set the  
3 season open date from September 1 to November 15th to  
4 September 16 to November 15. The other change is to  
5 change the closure of Federal public lands from  
6 September 1 to September 14th to September 16 through  
7 September 30th. So Federal lands would be closed from  
8 September 16th to September 30th. I think that's what  
9 we were attempting to do.  
10  
11 MR. HERNANDEZ: Second.  
12  
13 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: It's been moved  
14 by Mr. Schroeder and seconded by Mr. Hernandez to amend  
15 the main motion.  
16  
17 Discussion by the Council.  
18  
19 Mr. Douville.  
20  
21 MR. DOUVILLE: I took it upon myself to  
22 ask one of the residents in Yakutat for his opinion and  
23 he's lived there for a long, long time. I'm sure you  
24 know Sam. He answered me saying even if it would take  
25 pressure off the Ahnkin River, with the small limit  
26 for moose I'm afraid they would shut down west of the  
27 Dangerous as the quota combines east and west. If that  
28 opens the season early for local subsistence and I  
29 would not want to disrupt that, therefore I'm opposed  
30 to the early opening east of the Dangerous.  
31  
32 I'm having a hard time grasping this  
33 whole situation to be honest with you. I do respect  
34 those people that live there and what they want to do,  
35 so I would defer to them to help me, but I still don't  
36 understand clearly what's going on here. Listening to  
37 the testimony here it all sounded okay, but listening  
38 to Mr. Sensmeier and Sam it's not okay or not quite  
39 okay. So I'm having a problem with it.  
40  
41 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr.  
42 Douville.  
43  
44 Mr. Bangs.  
45  
46 MR. BANGS: I would agree with Mr.  
47 Douville, but then on the other hand we have the  
48 Wrangell Advisory Committee put in the proposal, so  
49 they've got to be residents and I'm just confused about  
50

## Page 318

1 what to do with this.  
2  
3 I can't grasp it either, Mike.  
4  
5 Thank you.  
6  
7 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Mr. Sensmeier.  
8  
9 MR. SENSMEIER: I'd like to thank Mr.  
10 Douville. I've known Sam all my life. We grew up  
11 together. The people that we had a meeting with at the  
12 senior center are also of our generation and they made  
13 known their opposition at that time along with others  
14 who called me last night and this morning in addition  
15 to Harold Robbins, Bob Miller and Gary Gray. We, along  
16 with Sam, don't see that it would benefit local  
17 subsistence users to open up the eastern section of the  
18 Dangerous.  
19  
20 Thank you.  
21  
22 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr.  
23 Sensmeier. We have an amendment on the floor. Is  
24 there any discussion with respect to the amendment.  
25  
26 (No comments)  
27  
28 MR. BANGS: Question.  
29  
30 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: The question has  
31 been called for the amendment to the main motion where  
32 the amendment would now read -- or it would now change  
33 the -- please, Mr. Schroeder.  
34  
35 MR. SCHROEDER: The amendment would  
36 change the season opening from the requested September  
37 1 to November 15th to starting September 16th to  
38 November 16th. Secondly, it would change the closure  
39 period for Federal public lands from September 1 to  
40 September 14th to September 16th to September 30th.  
41  
42 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Thank you, Mr.  
43 Schroeder. All in favor of the amendment to the main  
44 motion signify by saying aye.  
45  
46 IN UNISON: Aye.  
47  
48 CHAIRMAN BANGS: All opposed.  
49  
50

## Page 319

1 (No opposing votes)  
2  
3 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: All right. The  
4 amendment passes. Now we're back to the main motion to  
5 support WP18-10 as amended.  
6  
7 Mr. Hernandez.  
8  
9 MR. HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Ms. Needham.  
10 Is Susan Oehlers still on the line?  
11  
12 MS. OEHLERS: I am on the line.  
13  
14 MR. HERNANDEZ: This kind of brought up  
15 a new question in my mind that needs a little  
16 clarification and I think the issue here is that by  
17 opening up the season early east of the Dangerous River  
18 there could be the potential to take a greater portion  
19 of the quota in that area which would limit easier  
20 opportunity west of the Dangerous, which is heavily  
21 utilized. Does anybody disagree with that, that that's  
22 the situation we're dealing with?  
23  
24 (No comments)  
25  
26 MR. HERNANDEZ: Okay. So in reading  
27 the analysis, it's important for me to understand how  
28 the quota is set. I think the answer to that is on  
29 Page 228 in the middle of the page and is this a  
30 relevant paragraph where it says Since 2010, the  
31 Yakutat District Ranger has used the delegated  
32 authority to establish the moose harvest quota in the  
33 fall for Unit 5A except the Nunatak Bench at 55 bulls,  
34 with no more than 25 of those bulls to be taken in the  
35 area west of the Dangerous River.  
36  
37 So I guess my question is should say 40  
38 bulls be taken in that area east of the Dangerous  
39 River, would that mean that there would only be like 15  
40 bulls available west of the Dangerous in that  
41 hypothetical situation?  
42  
43 MS. OEHLERS: Through the Chair.  
44 Council Member Hernandez. Yes, if I can try and  
45 clarify. We set an overall quota for Unit 5A and so  
46 this year we did move it up to -- trying not to muddy  
47 the waters here, but we did move it up to 60, but east  
48 and west of the Dangerous are separate quotas. So  
49 what's taken on one side of the river is not  
50

## Page 320

1 necessarily going to affect the quota on the other  
2 side. They are set separately.

3  
4 That being said, there is an overall  
5 quota that we try not to exceed and that kind of gets  
6 back to that situation which Ms. Sell described where  
7 we try not to go over on either side. That's a little  
8 bit beside the point. I guess the main point is the  
9 quotas are set separately east and west of the  
10 Dangerous. So we would be managing for a maximum quota  
11 on either side. So what's taken on the east side is in  
12 general not going to have an effect on the west side.

13  
14 Does that help?

15  
16 MR. HERNANDEZ: Well, that helps  
17 because you're kind of contradicting what the concerns  
18 are in opposition to this proposal. The way I  
19 understand it you're saying -- well, to go on here it  
20 says in that same paragraph, no more than 25 bulls to  
21 be taken in the area west of the Dangerous River. I  
22 mean I don't see any mention of a quota recommendation  
23 for east of the Dangerous River.

24  
25 So are you saying there would be 25  
26 bulls allowed to be taken west of the Dangerous River  
27 regardless of what's taken east of the Dangerous River?

28  
29 MS. OEHLERS: Right. Through the  
30 Chair. Mr. Hernandez. In this situation we would be  
31 looking to take 25 bulls west of the Dangerous and 30  
32 east of the Dangerous for a total of 55 bulls.

33  
34 MR. HERNANDEZ: Okay. I think that  
35 clarifies it for me.

36  
37 Thank you.

38  
39 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Mr. Douville.

40  
41 MR. DOUVILLE: Okay. Well, Sam is  
42 worried about -- he said this is a combined quota and  
43 if the east goes over, well then the west would suffer  
44 for it, is that correct?

45  
46 MS. OEHLERS: Through the Chair. Mr.  
47 Douville. That does bring up a good point and I'd also  
48 offer if the State has any thoughts on this. You know,  
49 we do manage this as a combined quota, but we do as  
50

## Page 322

1 say hit 30, you would probably close it so that you  
2 would still have 30 available on the west side as well.

3  
4 MS. SELL: You're asking me questions  
5 for something we've never done before and we've never  
6 made 30 on the east side of the Dangerous. So  
7 hypothetically I believe we would just have to monitor  
8 how quickly the harvest is going to try to not go over  
9 that quota of 25. That's not to say we would take that  
10 away from the west side of the Dangerous at all.

11  
12 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Mr. Scott.

13  
14 MR. SCOTT: Through the Chair. Member  
15 Hernandez. I guess first off we recognize how  
16 important the west side of the area is to the local  
17 user groups there. I think some of the confusion comes  
18 for us and probably everybody looking into this. As we  
19 manage the hunt on the Yakutat Forelands under one  
20 permit number, RMO-61, a joint permit issued by the  
21 Forest Service as well as the Department.

22  
23 So it may be something as simple -- and  
24 not having thought this out, so all of the comments  
25 that have been made are great, but it may be something  
26 as simple as just managing them as separate hunts.  
27 Establish a quota on the west side, establish a quota  
28 on the east side and if we bump up against it -- I mean  
29 we're going to get the quota on the west side. History  
30 tells us that at least for the foreseeable future  
31 that's going to happen.

32  
33 The quota on the east side of the river  
34 we haven't gotten there and we see unutilized  
35 opportunity there and additional bulls standing around  
36 available for harvest and that's our goal. So if that  
37 means we need to separate the hunts, I think we could  
38 do that, frankly. Unfortunately I don't know if we can  
39 administrate it.

40  
41 We might be able to administratively do  
42 that without going through a Board of Game process, but  
43 I'm not sure about that. I mean that's kind of the  
44 hiccup in my -- you know even just establishing a new  
45 hunt number, but it is coming. As a management  
46 biologist, I don't think it's going to be all that  
47 tough, frankly, to manage for the two different hunts  
48 on either side of the river.

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1 Federal managers have some discretion on when we decide  
2 to close a season. For example this year we did go  
3 over on the west side, but since we're managing for the  
4 different sides we typically keep those quotas as  
5 independent.

6  
7 Again, I would offer if the State has  
8 any thoughts on that since this is managed jointly. We  
9 try and keep it within that quota, but we do set it as  
10 a target. It's not hard and fast. It's something we  
11 try and keep within. Given the current management, we  
12 don't always hit that exactly on the nose. So I don't  
13 really see this having an effect on the west side  
14 overall.

15  
16 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Do you have a  
17 follow up? Mr. Hernandez has a follow up.

18  
19 MR. HERNANDEZ: I see the State is  
20 huddling over there in the audience. I just wonder if  
21 they agree with this interpretation or not. I'd like  
22 to hear from them as well.

23  
24 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Ms. Sell and Mr.  
25 Scott.

26  
27 MS. SELL: I don't know if we're going  
28 to muddy this more or not.

29  
30 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Yes, please.

31  
32 MR. HERNANDEZ: So my question to you  
33 which I did not ask Susan, but it kind of would further  
34 clarify it to me, if 25 bulls were taken early east of  
35 the Dangerous River, would you close that season to  
36 anymore take?

37  
38 MS. SELL: That's a good question. So  
39 if we took 25 bulls on the east side of the Dangerous,  
40 as Susan was mentioning we have a combined total  
41 harvest quota that we don't usually want to go over,  
42 which is usually 55, I don't think that we would close  
43 it at 25 unless we were confident that we could hit  
44 that 30 mark, which is usually our quota on the east  
45 side of the Dangerous.

46  
47 Does that answer your question?

48  
49 MR. HERNANDEZ: So you're saying if it  
50

## Page 323

1 MS. OEHLERS: Mr. Chair, can I just add  
2 one thing. This is Ms. Oehlers.

3  
4 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Yes, please,  
5 Susan.

6  
7 MS. OEHLERS: I'm sorry, Ms. Needham.  
8 Ms. Chair. Maybe I didn't make this clear and what Mr.  
9 Scott was just alluding to. I think, you know, the  
10 important point is that, you know, it is a joint quota,  
11 but I expect that we would do a similar action as we do  
12 on the west side. If we had a quota of 30 or whatever  
13 number we set for the east side once we approach that  
14 quota, we could go ahead and close that side.

15  
16 So I'm just getting at the point where  
17 what the harvest on the east side is not going to  
18 affect in my mind the harvest on the west side. Just  
19 like we do on the west side every year the District  
20 Ranger has a delegated authority, he sets the quota.  
21 When we get to the point where we're getting close to  
22 that quota we close the season and that's what we've  
23 been doing on the west side.

24  
25 It hasn't been an issue on the east  
26 side, but if this proposal is passed and we do have a  
27 higher harvest and we reach that quota, we could go  
28 ahead and close it, so that would not affect the  
29 harvest opportunities on the west side.

30  
31 I hope that clarifies it somewhat. And  
32 I hope I didn't misspeak on that if the State has any  
33 additional thoughts. Whether or not it's officially  
34 managed as different hunts, as Mr. Scott was alluding  
35 to, we do have the ability to close either side of the  
36 Dangerous.

37  
38 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Thank you.

39  
40 Mr. Sensmeier, Mr. Howard, Mr.  
41 Douville, then Ms. Phillips.

42  
43 MR. SENSMEIER: I'm getting tired. I  
44 just heard someone say that there's bulls that are just  
45 standing around and not being hunted. I have a hard  
46 time looking at that. That's no bull.

47  
48 (Laughter)

## Page 324

1 MR. SENSEMEIER: I understand Sam's  
2 concern. If there's additional hunting on the eastern  
3 side and the quota is reached over there, it won't be  
4 because it's being utilized by local subsistence users.  
5 It will be utilized by those who can access it by  
6 aircraft, which is the only means that you can access  
7 that area and we don't have that kind of money or  
8 pilots to participate in that. So I share his concern.  
9 We need those moose on the west side.

10  
11 There is an advisory meeting at home on  
12 the 14th of this month where they will be taking up  
13 fish proposals. I'm wondering if this might be  
14 something they can take up again now that more people  
15 are aware of this proposal.

16 Thank you.

17 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Thank you.

18 Mr. Howard.

19 MR. HOWARD: Thank you, Vice Chair. I  
20 did the same thing Mr. Douville did. I've got friends  
21 I can text and talk about this. So that leads to this  
22 question. Has the east side been open before?

23 MS. SELL: Through the Chair. Member  
24 Howard. The east side opens -- the whole entire  
25 Yakutat Forelands, the east and the west side of the  
26 Dangerous open at the same time and it's currently open  
27 right now and it closes on November 15th.

28 MR. HOWARD: Okay. So Mr. Sensemier is  
29 correct. The gentleman told me that there's hardly  
30 anyone from Yakutat that hunts the east side of that.  
31 It's interesting that this proposal -- and I applaud  
32 you guys for the effort of trying to do this and I  
33 understand where you're coming from, but you also have  
34 to take into consideration the residents of Yakutat and  
35 their concern for their own resource.

36 Thank you.

37 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: You have a  
38 response to that, Ms. Sell.

39 MS. SELL: Through the Chair. Member  
40 Howard. I think you guys have one of your tables in  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48  
49  
50

## Page 326

1 proponent wants to resubmit for an earlier date, we can  
2 re-analyze it and see how it's been affected, but to do  
3 it cautiously.

4 Thank you.

5 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Thank you, Ms.  
6 Phillips.

7 Mr. Bangs.

8 MR. BANGS: Thank you, Cathy. The way  
9 I look at this is that there's moose that haven't been  
10 harvested and they're standing around and all we're  
11 doing is giving a greater opportunity to subsistence  
12 users to go get those moose. I mean if there's 50  
13 percent of Yakutat residents that are taking the moose  
14 from the east side, give them a bigger opportunity.  
15 Maybe they can reach that goal that they're looking for  
16 to harvest.

17 I'm in favor of it now that I realize  
18 that it's just going to help the people of Yakutat.  
19 Thank you.

20 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Thank you.

21 Mr. Sensemier, then Mr. Hernandez.

22 MR. SENSEMEIER: I don't agree with the  
23 over 50 percent. If people are still fishing into the  
24 first week of October, I'd just reiterate again that  
25 the only access is by airplane. That's the only way.  
26 We cannot afford that. I agree with Patty and her  
27 suggestion and to monitor it cautiously and go from  
28 there. That seems like a fair thing.

29 Thank you.

30 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Thank you.

31 Mr. Hernandez.

32 MR. HERNANDEZ: I was just going to say  
33 that I think our amendment kind of would sort of help  
34 to ensure that maybe more of those moose would go to  
35 Yakutat residents. I'm hoping that would satisfy that  
36 situation a little bit as opposed to the original  
37 proposal.

## Page 325

1 there that was provided by the Forest Service about the  
2 percentage of subsistence users from Yakutat that  
3 harvest on the east side of the Dangerous and I believe  
4 it's over 50 percent on the east side of the Dangerous  
5 from Yakutat locals.

6 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Thank you, Ms.  
7 Sell.

8 Mr. Douville.

9 MR. DOUVILLE: So I guess you're  
10 telling me that you can control the hunt, so the people  
11 on the west side do not suffer because of a healthy  
12 harvest on the west side. I have it backwards, okay.  
13 To me it's north and south. This east and west doesn't  
14 cut it.

15 So if that's the case that you can keep  
16 those under control and the main users from Yakutat  
17 would hunt closer to home would not suffer, then I'm  
18 okay with it, but there is some concern that may not be  
19 the case.

20 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Mr. Scott, you  
21 had a response.

22 MR. SCOTT: Through the Chair. I just  
23 want to make sure I'm clear because I'm getting a  
24 little rummy too. Just in the overall harvest on the  
25 Yakutat Forelands what I'm hearing is we don't want the  
26 harvest on the east side of the Dangerous to impact the  
27 harvest on the west side of the Dangerous.

28 MR. DOUVILLE: That's right.

29 MR. SCOTT: Thank you.

30 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Ms. Phillips.

31 MS. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Chairman  
32 Needham. So the original proposal opened like six  
33 weeks early and we've now modified it so that it's  
34 opening it up 22 days earlier. Of those eight days  
35 earlier for -- no, two weeks of those 22 days is closed  
36 to the taking of moose except by residents of Unit 5A.  
37 I like that we've amended it to reduce that timetable  
38 so that we can monitor it over time and see how that  
39 harvest changes and then we can -- I mean if the  
40  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48  
49  
50

## Page 327

1 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Is there any  
2 other discussion for Council Members on the modified  
3 proposal.

4 MR. BANGS: Question.

5 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: The question has  
6 been called.

7 We'll do a roll call vote, Mr. Kitka.

8 I'm sorry. Before the vote there's a  
9 comment.

10 MR. DOUVILLE: If we did the proper  
11 justification. I'm not clear that we did do that.

12 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Thank you.

13 Mr. Schroeder.

14 MR. SCHROEDER: We've had a long and  
15 fruitful discussion on this proposal and I'll attempt  
16 to summarize the justification. The question is there  
17 a conservation concern and how will the recommendation  
18 address this concern. There is no conservation  
19 concern. The main impetus for this proposal is to  
20 utilize a resource that has not been fully utilized in  
21 the past. With a moose quota of 30 on average about 15  
22 have been taken over the last five or six years.

23 The goal of this proposal would be to  
24 expand the opportunity for subsistence harvesters to  
25 harvest these moose primarily by lengthening the season  
26 by 22 days.

27 Is this recommendation supported by  
28 substantial evidence such as biological and traditional  
29 ecological knowledge. I think the analysis provided by  
30 Staff was pretty thorough. We should also note that  
31 Forest Service funded a very large moose study some  
32 years ago in the Yakutat area and it's been an area  
33 that's been looked at pretty intensively by the Forest  
34 Service and the Department of Fish and Game to really  
35 have a handle on moose populations.

36 We do have -- obviously there's some  
37 controversy over this proposal in Yakutat. It comes  
38 from the Yakutat Advisory Committee, which is made up  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48  
49  
50

## Page 328

1 of Yakutat residents.  
2  
3 Will the recommendation benefit  
4 subsistence users and needs. The objective of the  
5 proposal is to expand subsistence opportunity and  
6 hopefully get a few more of the quota moose harvested.

7  
8 Will the recommendation unnecessarily  
9 restrict other uses. Probably not. What is needed is a  
10 parallel proposal that goes to the Board of Game to  
11 adjust the State season such that non-Federally  
12 qualified hunters don't suffer in their harvest  
13 opportunity.  
14

15 So I think that covers the points we  
16 need to cover.  
17

18 ACTING CHAIR NEEDHAM: Thank you for  
19 providing that justification. So we are now voting on  
20 WP18-10 as amended.  
21

22 We'll have a roll call vote.  
23

24 Mr. Kitka.  
25

26 MR. KITKA: Thank you, Madame Chair.  
27

28 Raymond Sensmeier.  
29

30 MR. SENSMEIER: We're voting on the  
31 20th September date? Okay. Yes. I vote yes.  
32

33 MR. KITKA: John Yeager.  
34

35 MR. YEAGER: Yes.  
36

37 MR. KITKA: Michael Bangs.  
38

39 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Yes.  
40

41 MR. KITKA: Cathy Needham.  
42

43 MS. NEEDHAM: Yes.  
44

45 MR. KITKA: Steve is gone.  
46

47 Patricia Phillips.  
48

49 MS. PHILLIPS: Yes.  
50

## CERTIFICATE

1  
2  
3 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA )  
4 )ss.  
5 STATE OF ALASKA )  
6

7 I, Salena A. Hile, Notary Public in and for the  
8 state of Alaska and reporter for Computer Matrix Court  
9 Reporters, LLC, do hereby certify:

10  
11 THAT the foregoing pages numbered \_\_\_\_ through  
12 \_\_\_\_ contain a full, true and correct Transcript of the  
13 SOUTHEAST FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE REGIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL  
14 MEETING, VOLUME II taken electronically on the 1st day  
15 of November in Juneau, Alaska;  
16

17 THAT the transcript is a true and  
18 correct transcript requested to be transcribed and  
19 thereafter transcribed by under my direction and  
20 reduced to print to the best of our knowledge and  
21 ability;  
22

23 THAT I am not an employee, attorney, or  
24 party interested in any way in this action.  
25

26 DATED at Anchorage, Alaska, this 17th  
27 day of November 2017.  
28  
29

30  
31 \_\_\_\_\_  
32 Salena A. Hile  
33 Notary Public, State of Alaska  
34 My Commission Expires: 09/16/18  
35  
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## Page 329

1 MR. KITKA: Michael Douville.  
2

3 MR. DOUVILLE: Yes.  
4

5 MR. KITKA: Harvey Kitka is yes.  
6

7 Robert Schroeder.  
8

9 MR. SCHROEDER: Yes.  
10

11 MR. KITKA: Albert Howard.  
12

13 MR. HOWARD: Yes.  
14

15 MR. KITKA: Donald Hernandez.  
16

17 MR. HERNANDEZ: Yes.  
18

19 MR. KITKA: Madame Chair. It's  
20 unanimous, it passed.  
21

22 CHAIRMAN BANGS: Thank you, Cathy. We  
23 got through it. Tomorrow we're going to start with the  
24 Berners Bay report and proposal. I know there's going  
25 to be some public testimony.  
26

27 I just want to tell people that are  
28 online we'll be taking that up first thing in the  
29 morning. We'll recess until tomorrow at 8:30.  
30

31 Thank you.  
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33 (Off record)  
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35 (PROCEEDINGS TO BE CONTINUED)  
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